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THE

WORKS

OF

SYMON PATRICK, D.D.

SOMETIME BISHOP OF ELY.

INCLUDING HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

EDITED BY

THE REV. ALEXANDER TAYLOR, M.A.

MICHEL FELLOW OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD.

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VOL. IV.

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THE PARABLE

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THE

PARABLE OF THE PILGRIM:

WRITTEN TO A FRIEND.

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Perlegi ingeniosum et pium hunc librum, cui titulus THE PARABLE OF THE PILGRIM, in quo nihil reperio doctrinæ disciplinæve Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ, aut bonis moribus contrarium.

JOH. HALL, Rev. in Christo Patri HUMFREDO Dom. Episc. Lond. a Sac. Domest.

Ex Ædibus Londinens.
April 11, 1665.

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My Friend,

THAT I send one to wait upon you in the habit of a Pilgrim, which hath been so long out of fashion, and quite worn not only out of our use, but out of our knowledge; may seem a thing very strange, and be surprising to you. But when you shall consider that old fashions are wont to come about again, and that we are much in love with antiquities, and that our eyes are drawn to one that appears in an unusual or foreign dress, who else would not be observed; it may abate a little of the wonder. I say a little, because some will still remain, that he should come from one of my complexion; who have but a little fancy in my composition; and so must needs be a stranger to works of this nature. But you will receive satisfaction in this also, when you shall know (as the truth is) that I met with a man one day that had put himself in this habit; who pleased me so much, that he persuaded me to conceive this design of providing such another pilgrim to serve you. It happened, I mean, that reading a little while agone the works of a late writer [a], I found among other matters a short discourse, in the compass of four or five leaves, under this name of THE PARABLE OF THE PILGRIM: and it was so agreeable to that small portion of fancy I am endued withal, that I presently thought a work of this nature would be very grateful

[a] Baker's Sancta Sophia. [Hugh Cressy, the church historian, first gave this work to the world, under the title of "Sancta Sophia, or Directions for the prayer of contemplation, &c. extracted out of more than XL treatises written by the late Ven. Father F. Augustin Baker, a monke of the English congregation of the holy order of S. Benedict: and methodically digested by the R. F. Serenus Cressy, of the same order and congregation, and printed at the charges of his convent of S. Gregories in Doway:"—4to. 1657. The Parable to which bishop Patrick so candidly professes himself to be indebted for the first conception of his own fiction occurs in Treat. i. sect. 1. chap. 6. tom. i. p. 45. This is not however the primary source of its authorship. By father Baker's acknowledgment it was derived by him from the Scala Perfectionis of the Carthusian friar Walter Hilton (part 2. chapp. 21, 3. of the first edition by Wynken de Worde, A. D. 1494; or book ii. part 2. chapp. 3, 4, of that modernized by Abraham Woodhead, 8vo. Lond. 1659.); an Exposition or abridgment of which he had himself written with the title of "Vox clamantis in deserto animæ:" which latter work was never published, but formed part of his MS. collections formerly preserved in the convent of the English Benedictine nuns at Cambray, but no doubt dispersed or destroyed during the revolutionary convulsions of later times. An account of Augustin (whose baptismal name was David) Baker is given by Anthony à Wood, Athen. Oxon. iii. 7 sqq.]

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to you also. This was the occasion of these meditations, which as fast as my other employments would permit, I have brought into this shape wherein they are now presented to you. The title of my book I have borrowed from him, because I could not find a better; and I have made use likewise of one sentence very often which he puts into his Pilgrim's mouth: but with such improvement of sense, that it is little more than the words that I am beholden to him for. And as to the matter of it, I must leave you to judge, when you have perused it, how pertinent it is to your present and past condition; being assured that if you find not all that you desire, yet you will find that I had an unfeigned desire to do you service. As to the dress of it, I know that you will not expect this pilgrim should come to you in fine apparel and like some gallant, but rather judge it more decent that he is attired plainly, according to the quality and condition of his person and profession. This made me the more careless in what clothing I set him out, and to take such trimming as came next to hand: having a far weightier care upon me, to make him speak such clear and perspicuous language as you might readily apprehend. And indeed if there be any thing here said that is not plain and easy, it is very much against my will: for I am of his mind that hath told us, 'It is the greatest misery in writing not only not to be understood, but to be understood with difficulty.' And now, if this poor Pilgrim shall find any acceptance at your hands, and be found capable to serve the ends of wisdom and virtue, which he would willingly advance, I pray keep him with you, that if he can live longer than I, he may always tell you how much I am

Your friend,

S. P.

Covent Garden,
Decemb. 14, 1663.

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AN ADVERTISEMENT.

THE reader may be pleased to know that this Pilgrim hath dwelt for some time in the service of a private friend (to whose uses and occasions he was particularly addressed,) and there hath been so well entertained, that he was not ambitious of any higher preferment. But he met with a person so charitable, and who proved also such a friend to him, that he was thought worthy to be advanced to a more public employment, and would not be permitted to remain any longer in that private attendance. In obedience therefore to the commands he received, he comes now abroad, and offers his assistance to any that shall think good to make use of it: being grown also bigger since he went thither, and so of better ability to serve more than one. In plain words, (for those I most affect; and if you meet with so much as any metaphorical expressions in the book, it is but seldom, and only to comply with the title,) this discourse was writ with a respect to the necessities of a particular person: who imagined that others might possibly reap some benefit by it, and therefore desired it might not lie in a private hand. But it being necessary to transcribe the papers, that they might be read by the printer; it was thought withal advisable that some things should be enlarged to make them better understood, and others added to render the usefulness of the treatise (if it can have any) of greater extent. Only this must be remembered, that a regard was still had to the needs of that person (which yet are such as all pious souls generally labour withal,) and therefore it must not be expected that every case which can occur in Christian life should here be handled. And indeed that would have swelled this discourse to over great a bulk, and required very long consideration; or else it is like it had been attempted.

It must be noted also, that it was thought fit to make the distance but short between the Pilgrim's parting with his guide, and their meeting again; because that would still have too much enlarged

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this treatise, to describe particularly his behaviour in the whole course of an holy life, for which that would have been the proper place.

There are some things also may seem a little strange which are said to have happened to the Pilgrim; but you are to remember that God puts good thoughts into our minds more ways than one; and to know that the substance of what is reported is not a contrivance, but a real truth.

And now it would argue great unexperience of the world to expect that this Pilgrim should not meet with some whose curiosity he cannot humour, and others whose sourness nothing can please. But he that sends him abroad will be abundantly satisfied if he become useful to any well-disposed soul who shall have a mind to bear him company to Jerusalem. And if he chance to meet with any that shall only study to cavil, and pick a quarrel with him, he is prepared beforehand to take no notice at all of it, nor to be more troubled at their incivility, than a devout hermit is at the ugly faces which the creatures who something resemble men make at him as he is walking through the deserts.

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THE

PARABLE OF THE PILGRIM.

CHAP. I.

The occasion and intention of this pilgrimage, with the time when it was undertaken.

IT will contribute so little either to the profit or delight which I design you in the reading this history, to know the punctual years and days wherein every thing therein contained was done, that it will be a commendable thrift to spare myself the labour of that accuracy. It will be sufficient to let you understand, that no great number of years have passed, since a man who now calls himself Philotheus, but by others is called Theophilus, being weary of the country where he dwelt, and finding no satisfaction in any thing that he enjoyed, took a resolution to shift his seat, and to seek for that, of which he felt as great a desire as he did a want, in some other land.

Many strange countries there were which he visited in pursuance of this purpose; many steep hills he climbed, and many dangerous precipices he narrowly escaped; he committed himself not once or twice to the anger of the sea, expecting to be brought to the port which he so much wished: but still he was as far from the accomplishment of his desires as when he first launched out, and found all his pains rewarded with nothing but weariness and tired spirits. If it was the intention of this paper to recount all his adventures, and the several issues of them, (which are enough to fill a volume,) the story,

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I believe, would not be altogether useless, nor without that pleasure which such relations are wont to yield to those that read them. But having resolved for divers causes to begin the history of his life there, where he began to enjoy a taste of happiness, I shall reflect no further upon the former part of it, than only to tell you in what case that blessed hour found him. You must know then, that after so many tedious journeys, and as many disappointments, his legs beginning quite to fail him, and to deny him so much as their support, he sat down upon the ground in a deep melancholy, and such a great heaviness of mind, that it was feared he would sink lower, and go no further to seek a grave. His countenance was so altered, that there were very few marks remaining of the same man he was before: his looks were dejected, his eyes grew hollow, his complexion turned sallow; and, in short, his blood was so impoverished of spirits, that his flesh fell to the very bone, and his cheeks, in a despair of any other comfort, seemed to desire to meet and kiss, and so bid the world farewell. In this dismal estate he continued but too many days; and according to the nature of that thoughtful humour, which now had gained the supreme power over him, he mused on divers things, and contrived several new journeys in his fancy, which yet he saw at the same moment would only contribute more to his affliction, and nothing at all to the amendment of his condition. But at last, as if he had been admonished by some courteous angel, which he fancied then flew by him, and gave him a small touch with his wing, he felt a thought stir in his soul, remembering him of a place called Jerusalem, which he had totally forgot in all his travels, and never so much as dreamed of directing his course unto. His heart, you may easily think, leapt at this sudden stroke, and his pulse beat at no ordinary rate: for having heard by some means or other in times past very much discourse of the beauty, and the pleasant situation of that city; of the sweet temper of the inhabitants, and the many goodly things that were to be seen and enjoyed there, above all other places; he was instantly possessed with a strong desire to remove his seat thither, and to seek his fortune (as we commonly speak) in another world. And pondering seriously with himself the little or no contentment which he had taken in his best condition here, together with the hopes which flut-

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tered in his soul of bettering himself there, his present weakness could not hinder him from being inspired with a conceit that he should be able to travel thither, nor repress his desires from growing into a kind of passion to be at that place whither his thoughts did run before him without his leave, and could not be persuaded to stand still for one moment. Such is the nature of every excellent good, when it presents itself to us, and fans our souls with any hopes of obtaining it, that our desires think to waft us as fast as they can unto it; and growing continually in strength and swiftness by their own motion, the gale proves so stiff, that our hearts are swelled therewith, and leave no room for any other thoughts, nor can be at any rest till they be possessed of it. Thus would this poor man have taught those who now beheld him, though they had never read a word in their own souls; for his mind was so impressed with the happiness which he heard dwelt at Jerusalem, that he was not able to discharge his soul at any time of those thoughts and desires which lifted him up from the ground, and told him they would carry him thither. When he did eat or drink, Jerusalem would still be in his mouth; when he was in company, Jerusalem stole away his heart from them; nay, in his very sleep it would not stay away, but he was wont to dream fine things of Jerusalem. But that which makes the story of this person the more remarkable is, that it was toward the latter end of the year, and in the decay of all things, when these good thoughts began to spring up in his soul. When the earth had removed itself a great way from the sun, when all the gallantry of the fields had resigned its place to ice and snow, when charity grew cold, and Christian virtue seemed to be gone back to its root, when the ways were untrod, and few or no travellers upon the road; then did these zealous desires begin to bud in the heart of this honest countryman, and he felt such a vehement heat urging and stimulating his breast, that he could remain in no quiet for thinking of his journey to that fair place, which had been so much commended to his love, as the most flourishing and glorious that ever eye beheld.

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CHAP. II.

The earnest desire of the pilgrim to be at Jerusalem; and what he expected to find there.

Much time he spent in consultation with himself about the course which would be best to hold in his travel thither. There was no cost spared, no study omitted to get acquaintance with the nearest way to it; nor did he cease to inquire of those who were reputed the most skilful guides, that he might obtain a true information of every passage in the journey, which he seriously resolved to undertake. For though the weather was cold, the ways dirty and dangerous, and the journey he was told would be long, and company little or none could be expected to deceive the tediousness of the pilgrimage; yet so great were the ardours which he felt within himself, that he regarded none of these discouragements, but only wished that he might be so happy as to find the right way, though he went alone thither. And that which made his desires the more forward was, that he had often heard Jerusalem by interpretation was no meaner place than the Vision of Peace. A sight that he had been long pursuing in several forms and shapes, wherein it had often seemed to present itself before him, but could never court it into his embraces. O my beloved, (would he often sigh within himself,) O my heart's desire! O thou joy of the whole earth! In what corner of it dost thou hide thyself, and liest concealed from our eyes? Where art thou to be found, O heavenly good? Who will bring me to the clear vision of thy face? Art thou company only for the celestial spirits? Art thou so reserved for the angels' food, that we poor mortals may not presume to ask a taste of thy sweetness? What would not I part withal to purchase a small acquaintance with thee, and to know the place where thou makest thine abode? Many a weary step have I taken in a vain chase of thy society. The hours are not to be numbered which I have spent in wishing and labouring to lay hold on thee, and still thou flyest away from me. After all the sweat wherein I have bathed myself, I can find nothing, but only that thou art not here to be found. Thou art retired, it seems, from this poor world, and hast left us only a shadow

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of thee; for when we think to clasp thee hard in our arms, the whole force and weight of our souls doth fall upon nothing. O my heart, what ails thee? What torments are these which so suddenly seize upon thee? Ah cruel pains, the remembrance of which prepares a new rack for me! The arm of a giant would not ache more, if with all his might he should strike a feather, than my heart now doth but to think of the anguish it endured when all the strength and violence of its desires were met with emptiness and vanity. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the only place that can ease us of this misery! the place where the beloved of my soul dwelleth, the vision of peace, the seat of true tranquillity and repose, how fain would I have the satisfaction of being in the sure way to thy felicity! This is all the peace I wish for in the world. No other happiness do I thirst after, as every thing can testify that hath been privy to my thoughts. There is never a room in my house but hath been filled with the noise of my sighs and groans after thee, O Jerusalem. Every tree that grows in my ground hath thy sweet name engraven upon it. The birds of the air, if they can understand, are witnesses how incessantly my soul pants and longs to fly unto thee, O Jerusalem. What charitable hand will guide me in the way to thy pleasures? Who will bring me into that strong city, the retreat of my wearied mind, the refuge to recruit my tired spirits, the only place of my security, my joy, my life itself? Wilt not thou, O God, who hast led me to the knowledge of it, who hast filled me with these desires, and hast brought me into a disesteem and contempt of all other things? O let not these desires prove the greatest torment of all unto me, for want of their satisfaction. O forsake not this soul, that hath forsaken all other delights, and taken its leave of every other comfort, that it may go and seek for thee at Jerusalem.

CHAP. III.

The great trouble that he fell into, because of the different ways which he was told of to that place.

In this manner the poor man was wont to sigh out his soul, hoping that at last the heavens would please to hear him, and

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in their own; and they fancied themselves engaged against sin, while they were buffeting a contrary opinion. There was no heat but they took it for divine, though it were of their own kindling; and, so they were but all on fire, they never doubted but it was from heaven. For there was no sin in those days like moderation, and no virtue comparable to a furious and headlong zeal. But yet he received this benefit by those unhappy feuds, that they made him sometimes think it was no mean thing in the esteem of others as well as himself, for which there were so many and so fiery contenders. The prize he hoped would prove glorious, which had drawn into the field so many combatants, and which with such zealous sticklings all sides sought to win. The affliction also which he felt in his spirit when he beheld them so sharply engaged had this good effect upon him; that it made him more sensibly admire the goodness of God, which had preserved him from listing himself in any of those angry parties, and entering into those never enough to be lamented broils. This put him likewise in some hopes that he would not suffer him to remain long without the knowledge of the truth, who had so graciously prevented him from diverting into the paths of falsehood. This degree of understanding he had already acquired, that sweetness and love, meekness and peace, were the harbingers of divine knowledge; and since they were become his guests, he hoped that would not be far behind. But that any man who knows God to be love should imagine that he will dwell in a mind where there is nothing but hatred to be found, seemed a kind of prodigy unto him. And it did quite astonish him to see that so many men did dream that the way to the Vision of Peace lay through the field of strife and war; and that we must come to live together in endless love hereafter, by living in perpetual frays and brawls in the world where we now are.

CHAP. IV.

How he happily heard of a safe guide unto it: with a true character of him.

And he truly who is not wont to frustrate the expectations of such well-minded souls, did not use much delay before he

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gave him a sensible demonstration of that which he already believed. He found that the God of peace could not make himself long a stranger to men of peaceable spirits, and that he waits sometimes to do us a pleasure there, where we feared to meet with harm and mischief. For falling one day into the company of some persons who were discoursing concerning the state of affairs abroad, he happened to light on that which he verily thought their vain jangling would fright and drive away. There were many debates passed about the several opinions that were then on foot, and about the grand supporters of them. Some leaned to this, others to that; but he could not perceive there was any of them who was not addicted to a sect, and did not seek to hear the voice of Jesus Christ amidst the clamours and hideous noises of the disputers of the world. At last there stood up an old man that was a perfect stranger to him, who told them that in his judgment (if it would be permitted him to deliver it boldly) they were hugely mistaken who marched under the banners of any of those leaders in defiance to the rest of their brethren. Jerusalem, he said, was very little beholden to them, which was a city at better unity within itself than it was supposed by their ensigns; and he believed the way to that place would be found to be more peaceable than to be disturbed with the sound of drums and trumpets. Their zeal (he continued) might be the effect of little, not of much knowledge; and their confidence the nursling of an overweening opinion of themselves, rather than the issue of a sound judgment and clear conception of things. In fine, he told them, that if they would take a little time to cool themselves, and would abate so much of their presumption as to think they might possibly err, he doubted not but to bring them to a person, who (though obscure and of no great note among them) should make them confess he gave them better directions than they ever heard of in the way to Jerusalem. There was none there at that time, but either out of curiosity, or some dissatisfaction, desired instantly to know who this man should be, and in what place he hid himself from the world. They concealed the anger which they conceived at his free reproof; and having rendered him faint thanks for his liberty of speech (professing they loved an open enemy better than a dissembling friend) the very love of novelty led them to request him to bring them acquainted

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with this rare person. That is a very easy matter to do, replied the old man, for he is one that is conversible enough, and besides not far distant from this place; but for the present I shall choose to spare the mention of his name, and let you know him only by his character. He is a person then that is altogether disinterested, and a partaker in none of those sects and factions that are among us. "One that hath Zion and Jerusalem more in his heart than in his mouth, and loves to do more than to talk: but when he speaks, his words are more than sounds, and have a sting in them which pierces the very heart. If you did but hear him, you would feel that he leaves a true compunction in the spirit, and not a false alarm in the ear. His head is grey, though not his hairs; his wisdom makes him more venerable than his years; he knows better how to live than others do to dispute; and he can argue more for peace than they for their opinions. He hath faith enough to save himself, and charity enough to believe that others may be saved that are not in all points just of his belief. His compassion is equal to his understanding, his meekness equal to his zeal, his faith is matched with charity, his love to his neighbour is proportionable to his love to God, and his humility and modesty is equal to them all. He seems to me to be a piece of the wrecks of ancient Christianity; a relic of the golden age; one of the children, and not of the apes of antiquity. He hath escaped the contagion of this evil age without flying from it; and he is master of more strength than custom is of force and violence. The general corruption which hath overspread us hath not been able to prevail over the purity of his temper. And all the wickedness which could not but touch him hath not yet had the power to defile or sully him. If those worthies, in whose veins the blood of Christ did run, could return to visit the world again, I make no doubt but they would discern in him such marks of their virtue, that they would confess him for one of their race, and embrace him as an inheritor not only of their name, but of their noble qualities." If you would know any more of him, you had better learn it from himself, than from me; only this I can assure you, that by his guidance there are many men who have made a very happy progress towards heaven. And if you fear that when you go unto him, you may lose your labour, and not find him, or that you may

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find him little at leisure; I can give you this further assurance, that being a man of peace, he stirs but little from home, and hath but little company neither that frequents his house.

CHAP. V.

The opinion which others conceived of that guide; and his address to him.

You cannot imagine how much it pleased our traveller (for so he was in his resolution) to hear this news, and how much he thought himself beholden to God for bringing him so fortunately into this company which he studied rather to avoid. Without any compliments therefore, or waiting to hear what others would reply, he immediately offered himself to be conducted to the society of this excellent person; adding withal, that if the rest pleased not now to go along, they might hear from him when he should be able to make a judgment of him in what esteem he was to be held. To this they all gave their assent, and were not a little glad of this expedient to keep out of the acquaintance of him whose character they nothing liked. But the stranger to whom he committed himself would not stir from that place till he had taken him a little aside to speak with him: where he let him know how unworthy a thing he held it to deceive any man's expectations with partial relations, which made him that he could not endure to conceal from his notice a matter that he might think most worthy his consideration, though he did not judge it fit before to declare it. This person (said he) to whom you are about to repair, I must tell you, is generally decried by all parties as no friend to truth, because he is no great stickler about the questions that have vexed our unhappy days. Some say that he is indifferent and lukewarm in religion: others will have the world believe that he is only endued with a great measure of moral prudence, but hath nothing of the Spirit in him. And there are some who do not stick to brand him with the mark of heresy, though, (to tell you the truth,) I verily think, the only reason is, because they imagine he doth believe whatsoever he doth not fiercely oppose. His life indeed is so holy and without blame,

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his carriage so sweet and courteous, his conversation so profitable, that I am inclined to think such good things cannot spring from a bad root: but yet there are that say, the poison is the more dangerous which is so finely gilded; and I must leave you to judge for yourself, and either to stop or pursue your resolution of going to him, as, those things well weighed, you shall see cause to incline. Here the good man made a pause, and seemed to be in a very pendulous condition, till the stranger added, I must be so just as to remember to subjoin this to the rest that I have said; that indeed all parties next to themselves are wont to commend him as the best of all. Now, I thank you, presently replied the other, that you did not omit to relate that observation, for it brings to my mind the story of Themistocles[a], which I have often heard our preacher use in the pulpit, to whom every one of the captains yielded the second place after they had preferred themselves to the first, and was therefore concluded to be the most worthy of all, if any thing but self-love might be admitted to give the judgment. Let us go, I beseech you, with all speed to this brave man, and not stay to deliberate any longer. For I remember also that I have heard very wise men observe, that there was never any person that advanced excellent things in the world, but his credit and reputation was blasted by those who were unable or unwilling to be so good themselves. I have a very great hope that this is the man whom Heaven hath designed to unscale my eyes, and make me see the way to Jerusalem. Or if it otherwise please, yet I nothing doubt, but being wholly bent to lead a pious life, God will have so much kindness for me as not to let me be dangerously deceived, nor to suffer a greater film to grow over my sight. These words he uttered with that vehemency and resolution of mind, that the stranger thought it was not fit to hold him in any longer consultation about it, especially since he saw his purpose founded upon so good an understanding. Taking leave therefore of the rest, who were but too glad to be rid of them, he directed him to the house of this guide, where he found, as he had been told before, that he was at home, and had not one creature in his company. After a very few civili-

[a] [Plutarch. in Themist. cap. 17. p. 265.]

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ties passed between them, and some excuses that the countryman made for his boldness in interrupting his meditations, he plainly told him (for he would not permit any long apologies) what the cause was of this address, and of the trouble he was come to give him. I am, said he, a true lover of Jerusalem, and have made a vow to take a journey to that place; but about the way thither I am so perplexed that I account it a great blessing that I have not lost my wits, and am not become unable to find my way to your house. One cries to me, Lo, here—another, Lo, there lies the path of life. Some would have me go through the water and be baptized again, telling me the Israelites passed through the sea to go to Canaan; others seem to draw me through the air, and teach me to fly aloft in towering speculations; and there are not wanting those that would turn me into a stone, and render me at once as humble, and as lumpish and melancholy too, as the earth itself. But every one of these, methought, did lead me into the fire, and I felt in the water itself the flames of strife and contention about my ears, which made me that I durst not commit myself to the hands of these or any of their fellow-guides. But hearing, sir, that you are of great abilities to direct me, and that you are a man of peace, and more than that, a man of good will, who hath a strong propension to do good; I am come to make it my humble request unto you, that if it be true which is reported of you, you will do me the favour to afford me some charitable instructions about the most passable way to Jerusalem.

CHAP. VI.

The acceptance which he found with him; and how plainly the guide dealt with him about the difficulties of the way.

Now, the inquirer appearing in habit like a pilgrim, having a very innocent countenance, an humble behaviour, and using such language as signified that it was not curiosity, or a mind to try the skill which the other had in foreign parts, but a real desire to travel, which had brought him thither; answer was returned by him to whom he made his application, that he

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was heartily glad to meet with any man that would ask the way to Jerusalem; and that he thought he read in his face so much of the serenity of his mind and the sincerity of his heart, that he might be confident he came with a real desire to receive satisfaction about it. But, said he, though I must needs grant that I am furnished with some knowledge of the way to that city, yet perhaps I may spare my pains of giving you any directions in it, because there is some reason to think you will not be at the pains to follow them: for, if you will give any credit to my words, I must let you know that the way is both long and also full of many and great difficulties; and that there are many ways also which will seem to you to lead straight to it, and which many men will point you unto as the next road; which, if you should take, will lead you into great danger, and not only carry you a great deal about, but perchance conduct you to the quite contrary place, and end in your utter undoing. I would wish you therefore to consider a while whether it be an advisable thing to undertake such a journey, wherein there are so many hardships and so many cross paths: a journey which is so tedious also, and wherein I cannot promise you security from frights, thieves, beatings, and such ill-usages as have made many men, possessed with such intentions as you seem now to have, quite to lay aside all thoughts of it, and to sit down contented at their own homes. And, after all this, I know not whether you will yield your belief to all that I shall tell you of the way; if you have heard some of the reports which are spread of me, and have received any prejudice at all against me, which I am sure will be increased by some of the precepts that I must give you.

The pilgrim was so far from showing any tokens of disgust at this discourse, that he rather discovered an inward pleasure that he had conceived in the freedom and prudence of it. And after he had rendered him his thanks for dealing with him so impartially, he beseeched him that he would not think it fit to spare his pains which he had already, with no small success, begun to bestow; but that he would make a poor soul so happy as to let it know from that mouth, which he perceived would not deceive or misguide it, that difficult, long, and dangerous way which leads to Jerusalem. I am not ignorant indeed (continued he) how much many men are wont to startle

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and boggle at those terrible words; but, I thank my God, they strike no terror at all into my heart, nor move me one jot from the resolution which I hope is immovably settled in it, of going to that blessed place. For so much have I heard of the glory of it, that I am apt to think of nothing else; and so I may but come in safety thither at the last, I matter not at all what the way may be which carries me unto it. Oblige me therefore, I beseech you, so much as to be my guide, and to chalk out the way for me. I am confident you will not repent of your labour, when you shall see your directions observed with as much faithfulness and care as they are by you delivered. And as for the trust which I repose in your skill and sincerity, I am as confident, by what I discern already, that I shall as little repent of it as you will of your taking me into your tuition. I doubt not at all but I shall be better taught than yet I have ever been; and if the world judge otherwise, I beseech you, do not take me for one that measures men's worth by their esteem with the vulgar sort, or by the favour they have obtained to be commended by the mouth of common fame. The vulgar themselves have whipped her about the world as a lewd strumpet; and we have a plain saying, that the common report hath too often a blister upon her tongue. Therefore speak, sir, I entreat you, and let me know what you are from your own mouth, and not from other men's: for as I never intended to trust my neighbour to choose my opinions for me, and to dispose of my belief, so do I never mean to resign my mind to be stamped with those characters that they shall please to make of men and of their qualities. I never yet beheld so many saints as they have created and worshipped; nor can I take all those for devils whom they are pleased to defy and abominate.

CHAP. VII.

The guide discovers his sincere and upright intentions.

I CANNOT relate how much this devote person was overjoyed to hear this welcome language; but the reply which he made him did give no small indications of a great contentment which

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he took in the answer he had received. You cannot think it (said he) a greater happiness to be instructed by me than I do to find a person both so desirous and so capable of instruction. It gratifies me very much, I assure you, to find such a good will in you, (which is no small step in your way to Jerusalem,) especially since I see it so unmovable, that it is not like by any thing which may happen to be so much as shaken. Your resolution truly is admirable; and I cannot tell you what pleasant emotions I felt within me to behold so little amazement appear in your soul, at the dreadful noise of trouble, pains, and danger. You are excellently qualified, I see, for this undertaking; and without flattery I tell you, there never was any, in my opinion, better appointed for this journey, if you can but maintain so much courage and patience as you promise; and will, without quarrelling, murmuring, or troubling yourself about the affronts which may be put upon you, pass on your way as if you met with nothing that did displease you. But, above all, it highly pleases me to hear you say, that the place whither you would go is so much in your heart that you think of it more than any thing else: for something relating to that contains the greatest part of the advice which I am to give you. And as for myself, since you will not be prepossessed and forestalled with the common opinions and the voice of fame, I will be so just as to let you know the very worst of me. I remember that Furius Cresinius, a peasant that lived near to Rome[b], was defamed in ancient times by many people of that city, and accused for bewitching the lands of his neighbours; which, though of larger extent, were not wont to yield so fair a crop as his few acres. To such an height did their jealousies and envy arise, that a charge was drawn up against him; and standing indicted of such unlawful means to enrich himself and undo others, a day of hearing was appointed wherein he was to receive a public trial. What course do you now think the poor man took to confute their calumnies and justify his own innocence? Truly, no other but this would he resolve upon: to bring along with him, on the day of his appearance, all the instruments of husbandry whereby he used to cultivate the ground, and spread them before his judges. So he did,

[b] Plin. H. N. l. xviii. cap. 6.

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and made his defence in this sort: If I be guilty of any enchantment, behold, I here set before you all the tools of that wicked practice, and I call all the gods to witness that I have not concealed one of them. If there be any faith in man, you may believe me, that I never used any other wizardy to make my land better than my neighbours' but what you will find to lie in these spades, ploughs, and oxen, together with this my good daughter. Unless you will reckon a great deal of pains, long watchings, and much sweat to be such unlawful drugs and poisons, that none but witches use them; and these, I must confess, I cannot produce in open court, nor find any means to show them to you. He said no more, but it was enough, for he was presently absolved by the suffrage of all the judges, and dismissed with those commendations of a good husband which he had well deserved. This, sir, is the very picture of myself, who intend now to make you my judge, and hope for as favourable a sentence from you before whom I have been accused, and as much misreported as this honest man whom I now named. I am, it is true, a person of small capacity, and less learning. There are many of my neighbours, to whom I freely yield the precedence, who enjoy far greater measures of wisdom and knowledge, and exceed me as much in such talents as the compass of Furius his land was exceeded by theirs that bordered upon it. But yet, so it is, that by the blessing of God upon my labours, there are many virtuous minds and souls truly large and generous that acknowledge themselves to stand indebted for what they are to my care; and that are esteemed by those that know them to be of a more excellent temper than those who have been managed by many of my litigious neighbours. This hath gained me too many evil eyes, and I am thought to use some arts of fascination, whereby to allure the best dispositions into my acquaintance and society. Then they will have it that I mingle subtle potions for them, and that they imbibe such crafty doctrines from me as teach them all ways of rendering themselves more fair and plausible than any others in their whole behaviour, in order to the bewitching of more men to become their disciples. This is the best language they will allow to the good manners wherein I study to educate them; for their envy and vexation

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will not suffer them to give their holy life the name of piety, though all acknowledge it carries the show of better fruit than is brought forth by the lazy and idle pretenders to faith and devotion. But God knows how far I am from teaching any thing but the naked and undisguised practice of real godliness. And you shall know also how little I am guilty of evil design or sinister method of winning to myself disciples: for I will lay before you the plain, simple, and unartificial rules that I give unto them; which will appear to be as far remote from all subtlety and craft, as the plough, the spade, and the harrow are from incantation, spells, and society with infernal spirits. All that I beg of you to the making of you profit under my hand, and to reap an abundant fruit by my labour to instruct you, is, that you will contribute some of your own pains to be joined with mine; and that you will use your best diligence both to receive and understand those seeds of knowledge that I shall sow in your mind; and to keep them safe, that they may not be lost when they are entertained. A little more patience also I must not forget to require of you than Cresinius demanded, (for I cannot so soon produce, as he did, all the instruments I must use for your good,) and then I nothing doubt, but if you pursue your design according to those directions and marks that I shall give you, they will not fail at last to bring you to the blessed place on which you have set your heart.

CHAP. VIII.

He begins his advice; and after the grand direction, which contains many of the rest, he gives him sundry preparatory counsels: and, above all, tells him that he must be provided with a strong resolution.

You shall find me obedient, replied the pilgrim, in all things unto your precepts; for truly my heart, as you are pleased to remember, is very much upon Jerusalem. And since it touched me with no small joy to hear you say that there was something belonging to this affection I have for Jerusalem, which would comprehend a great part of the directions you had to give me about the way thither, if it will not look like the arrogance of

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directing you how to place your instructions, let me be so bold as to desire, before you say any thing else, that I may know what the general advice is which you have to bestow upon me. It is well done, replied the guide, that you have put me in mind of that passage in my former discourse; and I am obliged, I think, to praise you for it, both because it argues that you diligently attend to what I speak, and because it cannot be better placed than where you would have it, in the very entrance of those directions that you are to carry along with you. And, to make my counsel the more portable, and to be comprised in as small a room as can be, that which I mean is nothing else but this. As you pass along in the way that I shall tell you of, it will be of great use to you to have these few words always in your mind, and sometimes upon your tongue, I AM NOUGHT, I HAVE NOUGHT, I DESIRE NOUGHT, BUT ONLY TO BE IN SAFETY WITH JESUS AT JERUSALEM. This one sentence, you shall see, hath so much in its bowels, that if you draw forth the virtue of it, and diligently observe it, my life for yours, you shall not fail in a competent time to arrive at the top of your desires.

Indeed, said the pilgrim, methinks I feel that I have received very great instruction already from you; and I did not think to have learned so much in so short a space, and by so small a company of words. Sure you have given me some spirits, and the very extract of things, else I could not have so suddenly felt the power of these words diffusing itself through my whole soul. I am strangely refreshed by them; and they have given me such a taste of your skill, that I perceive you can instantly reach my heart when you please but to open your mouth; and if I were half dead, I persuade myself you could revive me in a moment. But yet I believe that I should be the more enlightened by them, and better know their use, if I might be beholden to you for an account of the secrets of which they are compounded, and understand all the things that are contained in them. Do me the favour therefore, I beseech you, to open the sense, and disclose all the force of those words, that I may know what meaning you have involved in so brief a sentence. You shall not long be ignorant of that, said the guide, if you will but have the patience to attend a while

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to what follows, as a good preparatory to that discourse, and to all the rest that concerns your safe passage to Jerusalem. I must advise you, before you enter upon so long a journey, or make any further inquiries, to see that your body be in good health, lest you should fall into any such sickness by the way as might prove dangerous and fatal to you. And for that end I would also wish you to take some physic, the better to prepare yourself for travel, and to disburden nature of those ill humours wherewith you may abound; which will at least indispose you, and make you lazy and soon weary, if they be not timely discharged and carried away. Now the best counsels that I can give you of this kind are these that ensue. First, I would have you purge your mind of all unworthy thoughts of God, and persuade yourself that he is very good, a lover of souls, and exceeding desirous to see them at Jerusalem. Be sure you leave not so much as a suspicion of his willingness to make you happy, and to afford you sufficient means to attain your end: for you will not be able to stir a foot in your way if you bear any jealousies about you that God may not favour your undertaking, nor go along with you. You have been bred, it is like, in a great detestation of superstition, and may have heard so many declamations out of the pulpit against it, that you may think it thunderstruck many years ago: but let me tell you, that if you cherish not good thoughts of God in your mind, all your religion will degenerate into this spurious and baseborn devotion. Instead of that free and friendly converse that ought to be maintained between God and his creatures, you will only flatter him in a servile manner, and bribe him not to be your enemy. Do not imagine that I abuse this word *superstition*, or that you are in no danger to fall into it; for there are none more guilty of it than they that seem to be most abhorrent from it. Did you never observe what a terrible image of God there is erected in most men's minds, and how frightful their apprehensions are when they look upon it? Never was there any devil more cruel, or sought more to devour, than they have painted him in their souls. How is it possible, then, they should address themselves with any confidence and pleasure to him? How can they entertain any cheerful and friendly society with a Being which appears in a

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dress so horrible to them? And yet worship him they must, for fear of incurring his displeasure, and lest their neglects of him should rouse up his anger against them. Now between this necessity of coming to him, and that fearfulness to approach him, what can there be gotten but a forced and constrained devotion, which because they do not love they would willingly leave, did not the dread and horror they have in their souls of him drag them to his altars? And what are they wont to do there? Truly nothing but make faces, and whine, and cry, and look as if they were going to execution, till they can flatter themselves into some hopes that he is moved, by these pitiful noises and forced submissions, to lay aside his frowns, and cast a better aspect upon them. But then his nature remains the same still; and they fancy that he delights in the blood of men, though for that time he was pleased to smile a little upon them: and therefore they are constrained to renew these slavish devotions, and to fawn again upon him, that they might purchase another gracious look from him. In this circle do these poor wretches spend their days, and advance not one step toward Jerusalem. For as there can be little comfort to them, I should think, in such grim smiles; so you cannot imagine that it can be acceptable to God to see men crouch in this fashion to him, and out of mere fear afford him their unwilling prostrations. No; this, if any thing in the world, is that which ought properly to wear the name of superstition: a devotion which hath no inward spring in the heart, no life nor spirit in it, and, by consequence, is void of all savour and taste to them that perform it. It is sottishness to think that God will be contented with that which hath no better original than outward compulsion, and in its own nature is dead and heartless, dry and insipid: and yet no better service will you present him withal, unless you frame a lovely fair image of him in your mind, and always represent him to yourself as most gracious, kind, and tender-hearted to his creatures. Let this therefore be your first care, not only to form such a beautiful idea of him, but also to settle and fix it so firmly in your heart, that nothing may be able to pull it out. Then will you be prepared to follow all my other counsels, and most cheerfully also resign yourself to the obedience of the hardest commands. This will make you absolutely give up yourself to the divine will, and to

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embrace it freely also as most to be chosen, and that for itself and its own innate goodness. You will think that nothing but good can come from this good God, and therefore you will submit to his laws as loving commands, and not as imperious, tyrannical impositions. You will deny yourself in any thing that he would have you, that you may be made better than yourself, by becoming like to him. But otherwise I must tell you (and it is no new observation neither), that if your conceptions of him be not such as make you heartily love him, as you will serve him only with a forced obedience, so you will obey him with a sordid and niggardly affection. You will be very scanty and sparing in those duties which are of greatest moment, and most pleasing to him, and study only to express your liberality in things of lighter concernment, and such as are most pleasing to yourself: nay, things of your own devising you will be more ready to heap upon him, as so many courtesies whereby you shall oblige him, than to render him those services that are appointed by himself, which will be the less grateful, because they are his will whom you cannot love. This is ever the fruit of hard and penurious thoughts of God, that they shrivel up men's hearts too, and make them needy and penurious in the expressions of their love and obedience to him, and more forward to give him any thing than that which he most desires.

But I think I might have left you to deduce these things yourself, who have a capacity, I see, for greater matters; and therefore I shall shorten the rest of these kind of counsels, and forbear all long discourses and comments upon them. Secondly, then, it must be your care, when your mind hath recovered right thoughts of God, to purify your intentions thoroughly, and to see that they be clear and unspotted in his sight. Spread your very heart before him, and desire him that you may have his love, and that he would deal with you, as you sincerely aim at nothing but only to become what he would have you. Tell him that you mean in the greatest simplicity of your soul to do his will. Protest to him a thousand times that you desire above all things to know what that good, that perfect and acceptable will of his is. Let him know that you are so passionately bent to please him, that you would not stick to purchase the understanding of his pleasure at the rate of

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the whole world, if it was in your disposal. This will prepare you, in the third place, to throw out the sluggish humour which is in all our natures, and to dispose your will with true fervour to attend this business of searching out the will of God. Engage yourself as solemnly as you can to be very diligent in finding out the truth. Persuade your mind not to rest contented with that which first offers itself to your hands, but to examine and *prove all things*, and then to *hold fast that which is good*. It is a fault too common, that men take things upon the credit of others by whom they are brought to them, and not upon their own credibility. The reason of which is no other but this, that in the one way we make a purchase of them at a cheap rate, or rather have them for nothing; but in the other they will not come so easily, but cost no small pains to acquire them. There is a kind of impatience also in some natures which is not able to suffer any delays; and this being joined with a softness and delicacy which is a sworn enemy to all manner of trouble and pains, it renders men very willing to spare themselves the length and tediousness of an inquiry, together with all the difficulties of a choice. Hence it comes to pass that they love at first sight, and suffer others to choose their belief for them; and then afterwards they retain by custom and prescription that which they took but by chance and preoccupation. Make an essay therefore of the patience which you promise in your whole journey at the very entrance of it; and let your diligence to know the will of God be an earnest of that you mean to use in the doing of it. And as I would have you free yourself from this lazy credulous humour, so let it be your next care to rid your mind of its opposite, obstinate incredulity. Let not the cure of one sickness be the cause of another, nor that which takes away your softness and easiness to believe render you hard and impenetrable by all the impressions of truth. Employ the thoughts which I would have you spend in serious inquiry, to possess your mind with a strong persuasion of the certainty of Christian religion, and with a right understanding of the true design of that glorious revelation: for that both gives you such a prospect of the blessed place you are going to as nowhere else can be met withal, and directs you to such a course of real piety as plainly leads unto it. And the more confident you grow that Jesus is the Son of

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God (as the voice from heaven witnessed), that he is the Lord of life and the King of glory, the surer will you tread all the way you go, and the less danger there will be of stumbling; the sounder also and more healthful will you grow, so as not to faint, much less to forsake the Christian course. And next to this, I beseech you, use the greatest diligence to provide that your faith, which is to do all things in your journey, be not itself infected with the common disease of sloth and idleness. Be sure to purge your soul from all the drowsy and phlegmatic opinions you may have about it, which stifle and choke the very spirit and life of it. Do not cease till you have freed it of all obstructions, and rendered it so active and vigorous, that you can be confident in its own nature it will necessarily produce an holy life. Suffer it not to rest, no, not in Christ himself, till it animate you to a free and cheerful obedience to all his commands. Let it give your soul a sense that the whole of religion is comprehended in this one powerful word. Let it seem as a point from whence all the lines of your duty are drawn; like a fire in the middle of a room, sending out its heat on every side in an ardent love of God and of your brethren. Esteem it, I mean, such an hearty persuasion of the truth and goodness of all that Christ hath spoken, that by the force and virtue of it you become obsequious to his will in all things.

And having effected this, then search your conscience very narrowly to find out all the sins whereof you stand guilty: some of which may lurk so securely, or look so demurely, that a faith which is not very busy may either not espy them, or let them pass for no offences. These must all be purged out and left behind, as things that can by no means be permitted to go along with you. And for that end let me advise you to unload your soul of them all by humble confession: and if any of them lie as an heavy burden upon you, to repair to your spiritual physician, that he may help by his counsel and prescriptions to ease you of them. And in the last place, let all these be attended with a strong resolution, that though your sins should follow, and call after you, and beg to have but one word with you, they shall be so far from receiving any entertainment, that you will not so much as enter into speech with them, nor listen to the voice of any of their temptations. I

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will not deny but that it is a difficult thing not to lend so much as a good look to an old acquaintance; yet it will appear much otherwise to those who confess their sins so as to hate them, and to purge themselves from all affection to them. That therefore you must give me leave to subjoin to this advice, that you do not content yourself with such physic as cleanseth only the first passages, and carries away no more than the grosser humours out of the greater channels of your life: but that you administer such as will search into the furthest parts of your soul, and cleanse the spirit from all its defilements. You must not leave behind so much as a good opinion of any evil way. Not the smallest kindness for it, or, if it be possible, any inclination to it must be suffered to remain. For this you know undid no less than six hundred thousand travellers to Jerusalem in ancient times, and left all their carcasses buried in the deserts; who left Egypt, as you now are going to forsake the world; but it was in their bodies only, and not in their hearts and affections. Their mouths watered still at the remembrance of the flesh and coleworts, the garlic and onions; and they had a secret inclination, which could not be long concealed, to return to those enjoyments which they had abandoned. They loved the country from whence they were departed, though they hated the bondage: and it was not so much the evil customs, as the cruelties of that land, which made them sigh for deliverance. Which is but the type and picture of those persons now, who leave their sinful ways and practices, resolving never to return to them; but yet they bear them a great good will, and could be very well pleased if they could gain a permission to enjoy them, and not be damned to the bargain. They are often casting a kind and favourable look towards them; it tickles them to think how happy they should be if they could sometimes keep them company, and suffer nothing by it. It is not their sins that they are fallen out withal, but some of their followers that wait upon them: their smiles and salutes they receive with joy, and fear nothing but the sting which appears in the tail of them. We are wont, you know, to compare such persons to those sick men who dare not taste of the salt meats, and the raw fruit which they see their friends eat before them, because the physician assures them that death lies in ambush under every morsel. But they

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speak of them with such a gust, that (as we say) they lick their lips at those dishes: they fancy them to be very savoury bits, they have a great longing for them, and the very scent of them is so delicious, that they wish very vehemently they were not forbidden fruit. If they think not sometimes, that sure a little taste of them would do them no harm; yet they should esteem themselves far happier men than they are, if they were not tied to such severities. In such sort do those pilgrims hanker after their forsaken sins in their former evil courses; who hate not them, but only the mischief which they fear from them; and are not so much their enemies, as friends to ease and a quiet conscience. They would not forbear them, did not so great miseries threaten to come along with them; and their desires should not want satisfaction, were they not combated with contrary desires of avoiding the trouble which that will give them. Let me tell you, it is a thousand to one but they will find the means in some favourable occasion to insinuate themselves into their society again. They are not banished to so great a distance, as long as they hold the place they had in their hearts, but they may be restored, and have the liberty to return into their ancient embraces. This forced abstinence is so painful, and their enjoyment is so sweet, that they will live in hope of a reconciliation. The sin and the danger will not ever seem so inseparable. Their affections will make them sue for a divorce, which in a court where they are judges may be easily obtained. There are many arts of blanching the foulest matters: and virtue doth not so challenge to itself the sole privilege of being innocent, but vice will very often pretend unto it. It knows how to put itself into an harmless dress, and to pass under such borrowed titles, as shall conceal it from the knowledge of those who are afraid of nothing but its name and its punishment. Love is furnished with as many excuses as it hath desires; and is full of wit and address to obtain its end. They cannot be long asunder who are already joined in their affections; nor can any danger be so great that lies between to divide them, but it will be surmounted by that which hath already overcome themselves. So great need there is that reason should see to the implanting of this passion, which will so soon overtop it, and to provide that it be of a generous and noble stock, seeing it is like ever after

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to be its lord and master. It is in vain to object inconveniences to them, who know none so great as those of being denied their desires. They are afraid indeed of trouble and pain; but who can tell which is the most grievous, that which they feel, or that which they fear? the present misery of wanting what they love, or the future of enduring that which they hate? Doth not the former, think you, teach them with a quicker sense, being a present and a constant evil, and so most certain to be suffered; whereas the other, being to come, may seem doubtful whether it will come or no, and when it doth come, may not cost them half that pain which they must conflict withal to avoid it? It is a torment they find to live in restless longings, but they hope it will not be so great to give them satisfaction. They cannot rid themselves of the former, but they are persuaded they may soon be eased of the latter. After they have given their desires their full satisfaction, they doubt not with less trouble to give it to God, than they could have denied it to themselves. It is but repenting, they think, of the fact, (a business of no great trouble, and soon over,) and then God and they are both pleased; they by doing evil, and he by their sorrow for what they have done. Nay, they may seem to have done more for God's sake than for their own, because they enjoyed but only a single pleasure themselves, whilst they have endured a double torment for him: one in denying so long to follow their desires, and another in their regret for following of them now. I hope then you are convinced, that for the continuance of your good resolution, you ought not to permit so much as the least affection to any sin to go along with you. It will soon, you see, march after, if you carry such a friend to it about you; and though it follow at a distance at the first, yet it will pursue you so hard at last as suddenly to overtake you, or, to speak more truly, it will bring you back again, and cause you to retreat into its quarters. You must put your fancy therefore out of conceit with it, and possess your mind with odious representations of it. You must loath it, not as a sick man doth the meats on which he hath surfeited, but as an healthful person doth those to which he bears a particular antipathy in his constitution. You must not abstain from it only as a thing forbidden, but disgust it as that which deserves to be forbidden.

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You see how careful I am to establish this resolution in your soul, because indeed very much depends upon it, which hath made me to enlarge this discourse to a length beyond that which I intended. And truly it will cost you so much pains to form it; there will so many enemies oppose it; and perhaps when you yourself shall think that it hath settled itself in your heart, there will be so much still wanting to complete it; that I have an inclination (if it will not quite tire your patience) to add a few words more about the nature of this resolution. You will lose no time, I am sure, by this means, nor shall I hinder you in your intended pilgrimage to Jerusalem; but as the foundation well laid doth assure the superstructure, and one foot firmly planted doth make the next step more secure; so will the first part of your journey well performed render all the rest more easy and safe to you. It is of great avail, you cannot be ignorant, in all cases to begin well. There is nothing more imports to the happy or disastrous issue of any affair, than what manner of entrance we make upon it: and therefore let me not seem tedious to you, if I detain you here a while before we advance further, and if I make you stand still for a time, when you have a great mind, I believe, to be going forward.

I submit myself to your wisdom, said the pilgrim, and entreat you not to consult my desires at all, but only my necessity. Or if you would be sure to do what pleases me, know that you undertake an impossible task, unless you take the liberty to say what you think will displease me. If you lose any time, it must be by asking my leave to say your mind. I shall not think that you are guilty of making me stand still, unless you stay to obtain my consent that you may go forward in your discourse. This will be the only grievous thing that can befall me while I am in your company; and if you have a mind to exercise my patience, it must be by suspecting me impatient of your wholesome counsels. Go on, sir, I beseech you; and give me reasons for what I am to do, but not for what I am to hear. Tire me, if you can, with your precepts, but not with any more of your petitions to me.

You shall have no cause hereafter, replied the director, to complain of that matter: for a pledge of which promise you shall receive no other answer to what you have said, but only

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this new promise: that if I cannot serve you by the truth of what I say, yet the liberty and freedom of my speech shall make you know that I intend to do you service by revealing to you my very heart.

CHAP. IX.

A more particular discourse of resolution: and of the manner how to form such an one as will be sound and firm.

Let it be observed then, that the placing of this discourse concerning resolution at the end of my other counsels was not without design; for I would give you to understand, that it is not of any worth if it be not ushered in by precedent consideration. This must lead the way, or else no solid purposes will follow after. You must first be well acquainted with your duty, before you can resolve to contract a perpetual friendship with it. Do not think that this is a note too trivial and vulgar to have a place among my instructions; for I tell you truly, there are but too many, who, when they are best disposed, will resolve to do they know not what: who make large promises of those things, for the performance of which they are furnished with little power, less will, and scarce any knowledge at all. They will undertake a pilgrimage to the holy land before they know a foot of the way, or make inquiry how far it is thither. They will levy war against an enemy, of whose numbers, strength and policy they are utterly ignorant. And what wonder then is it, if they afterward let fall an enterprise that was begun rashly, and to which they were not carried by their judgment, but hurried by their blind and precipitant passion? Of this sort the man in the gospel seems to have been, who said at the first word, that he would go whither his father bade him; but afterward his fervour cooled, and he thought good to take his ease and rest himself[a]. I fancy such a person to bear some resemblance to a child, who having offended his father, comes and falls upon his knees for a pardon, to the grant of which the good man is already inclined. But then he saith, My son, you must be careful hereafter of your duty in such things as I shall require a proof of your obedience; and I must enjoin you such a course of life as will keep you in my favour, and finally leave you my blessing. And before he can have finished half a sen-

[a] [Matt. xxi. 28–30.]

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tence of what he hath to give him in charge, the youth takes the words out of his mouth, and replies, Yes, sir, all shall be punctually done which you desire: you shall never take me in any fault again, nor have cause to complain of my disobedience. I am resolved to be as observant of you in every thing as any child in the world can be. Let me but have your pardon, and doubt not of my conformity to your pleasure. But all this while it is the pardon upon which he hath fixed his mind, and he hath so little regard to the conditions upon which it is to be bestowed, that he hath not the patience to hear them particularly remembered. The joy which he conceives from the hope of his father's love throws him headlong into a consent, before he consider the instances wherein the sincerity of his heart will be tried and brought to the test. These may prove as cross to his will as to enjoy his father's good affection is agreeable to it: and that which was so hastily resolved will not be so speedily put in execution. Though he fancied that he would not stick at a thousand things to please his father; yet when he hears them named, perhaps there is not one of them that will be so pleasing to himself as to find him ready to performance. Such truly are the motions which many men feel in their souls, while the treaty is managed between God and them concerning their return to him to Jerusalem. They are very glad to hear of a truce; and their hearts leap for joy to think of returning into his favour, and seeing his face in that royal city. As long as the proposals run in general terms, that they must do the will of God, and run the ways of his commandments, they find no difficulty to accord him his desires. They readily yield to submit to his precepts, and say, It is pity they should live who will not serve such a Master. Jerusalem is a place of such glory, that while their thoughts post thither, they easily leap over all the difficulties which are in their way to it. But if you descend from hence to those particular differences which have been between heaven and them; if you stop them a while in their career, to acquaint them severally with every thing that will exercise their patience in the journey; they appear as desirous in some cases to retain their own will as before they seemed forward in all to be resigned to his; and it is manifest there are some courses to which their hearts are more wed than to Jerusalem. They

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do not like things so well in the pieces as in the lump. They do with their duty as men do with bitter pills, which they can swallow whole; but if they chew them, prove so distasteful that they are ready to spit them out again. These good motions indeed enjoy the name of holy purposes, and men think that now their hearts are fully set towards God; but they deserve rather to be called natural propensions, than voluntary purposes; and are to be esteemed the inclination of the soul, rather than the resolution. For the forming therefore of this, I must leave with you these three directions, in which I shall comprise the safest advice that I can think of in a business of this moment.

1. First, You must know, that a good resolution is never founded, but upon a particular consideration of every thing that is undertaken by you, after you have weighed them, and proposed them to your will severally, one by one. And therefore you, having it in your heart to go to Jerusalem, think seriously how many mile it is thither, and get an exact information of every step of your way to it: set down in writing every thing that is to be done, and all the events which are like to meet you in every stage; and then, as you go along in your meditation, ask your heart if it dislike no passage, and will not be tempted in some occurrences to turn aside. Remonstrate to it, that in such a place your appetite will be tempted with genial entertainments; and pray it to deal freely with you, and declare whether it can deny to it inordinate satisfaction. Tell your heart, that before you have gone many paces more, the wants of a poorer man than yourself will solicit your charity; and desire to know if it can do good, and trust God for the repayment of it. Represent to it, how highly you may be provoked at the next step by the insolence of some unruly traveller, and demand whether the passion of anger can suffer a bridle to be put upon it. And so laying before your eyes all the paths of sobriety, righteousness, and godliness, which I may hereafter mark and chalk out for you, ask your heart, What dost thou think? What dost thou conclude, upon a serious view of all the way to life? Shall we consent to take this course? or shall we balk some of these paths? What sayest thou? Shall we be sober in our opinions of things, in our thoughts of ourselves, in our desires, in our angers, in our eating and drinking (with all

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the rest which you must enumerate)? Shall we walk in peaceableness, and in patience, and in humility, and in purity? Or shall we shun some of these ways, and divert into the opposite road? Speak out, and let me know thy mind. Which of these dost thou except against, or must we equally approve of all? And never cease to put these and such like questions distinctly to your heart, till it give an express consent to every thing that presses for a resolution.

2. But then, secondly, after this is done, you must proceed to consider and make choice of every thing you intend to undertake, with all its appendant inconveniences and evils which come along with it: or else, when they shall come to face you, your resolution will start back in so unexpected an encounter. Inquire therefore into all the difficulties of every part of your way: consider the length of the miles, the danger of thieves, the badness of the weather, the scorching heat of the sun, the storms and tempests which may arise when you cross the sea, the hard lodging, the coarse diet, and all the mischiefs which I shall shortly show you do attend a way so little frequented as that to Jerusalem. Say to yourself, Will you be abstemious from all the pleasures which others riot in, when, besides the want of their mirth, you yourself will become the subject of it, and be exposed to their scorn and laughter? When your meekness is called cowardice, can you then curb your anger? If you be reduced to a poor condition, and become the object of that charity which others have received from your hands, can you then believe and not be discouraged? Will you still have a good opinion of your choice when you are vilified and condemned for it? Will you pretend to the strictness of this pious course when it procures you nothing but mocks and flouts? Nay, will you hold your way when you are loaden with stripes? Will you march on with a chain about your leg, or a rope about your neck? Do not trust your souls till they have made you a positive answer to these demands, and given you satisfaction, that, notwithstanding all you may suffer in your credit, in your purse, in your body, and in your life, they will not alter their purpose of going in these ways to the *holy land* and the *city of God*.

3. And then, in the last place, it will much conduce to the settling of a constant resolution, if you do not conclude too

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soon, but weigh all these things over again. Ask yourself the next morning, whether you still continue in the same mind. Know of your soul whether your purpose was not the effect of a present heat; and if after the cool of the night you can allow it, bid it compare all things deliberately on both sides, and, laying them in an equal balance, so incline and determine itself. On that side there are many pleasures which you must forego, and on this are many pains which you must endure. There is a soft and delicate way, and here are stony and cragged paths. In the other road you may enjoy your ease; but in this that I show you you must deny yourself, and labour hard to be saved. Do not the scales incline to the contrary side? Will you still be in love with this rough way which leads to Jerusalem? What have you now at hand to counterpoise and to weigh down the advantages which seem to lie on the other side against your resolution? You are undone if you are not furnished with a multitude of such considerations as these, of the worth and weight of a soul, of the glory of Jerusalem, of the pleasures that you shall soon taste in these ragged ways, which you must throw into the right hand scale with all the force of reason you have. Or, in one word, you must compare the beginning and the end of these two together, and then you will soon see the difference. There is nothing, you think, but sweetness in the ways which I forbid you, till you come to the conclusion of your journey; and then what provision will you find made for you but gall and wormwood? As, on the other side, you may fancy there is nothing grows but that bitter herb in the paths wherein I would conduct you; yet at the last however you cannot but promise yourself a garden of pleasure. Now, which of these will you make your choice, to which of them will you lean; to the present, or to the future good? To the present, no doubt, if you be a beast; but to the future, sure, if you be a man, and not forsaken of your reason. For continue to compare the length of these two, and see how far it is from the beginning of the pleasures in one way, and the pains in the other, to the end of both. Is it not a very short life of a few days which puts a period to them both? How can it be any great matter then to enjoy the one or to endure the other? But then where these end there is something else begins, and who can tell the

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length of that when the other are done and passed away? Now the disparity discovers itself: now your thoughts will be swallowed up in a bottomless abyss. For you can see no end of the pleasures to which one way leads you, nor of the pains to which the other brings you. So that you may let your soul know that this is the sum of the whole business: here are, on one hand, short pleasures and long pains; and on the other, short pains and long pleasures. Bid it choose now, like a rational creature, and embrace that which draws the will with greatest force unto it. I am sure there is nothing can tempt it to incline to the former but only this, that those pleasures are present, whereas these that I speak of are to come. Let it therefore never consider them as mere pleasures, but with this addition of short and long; and that will render the difference vastly great, and attract it mightily to the other hand. And if the scale seem to alter again, because you are sure of the present, but not of that which is to come, here you must employ your faith to give a weight to that which is not yet in being. It must make you feel how solid and massy those future enjoyments are, and then your work is done: for when faith hath made them present, as the other are, they themselves are so ponderous, that it will seem as light as feathers, whatsoever it be that lies in the balance against them.

I believe you see by this time that it is a matter of some labour to bring yourself to a thorough resolution; but when it stands on these grounds, I do not apprehend what temptation that should be which can hope to shake it. There is no new thing can present itself but what hath been already considered, and for which you are provided; and therefore it will despair, sure, (being clearly cast, and having lost the day,) of recovering any place in your esteem, or being of any moment hereafter with you. Its pretensions being quite spoiled, and all that it hath to allege confuted, it will be to no purpose again to solicit an heart which hath so solemnly given it a repulse and utterly rejected its suit. One thing indeed must not here be dissembled; which is the great difference that appears between the same thing while it remains in the speculation of our mind, and when it comes forth from thence to be put in practice. The distance is wide, it must be confessed, between thoughts and things. It is not all one to conceive and to bring forth,

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to discourse and to pass to execution. There is a great deal of pleasure attends upon our conceptions; and clear reasonings are accompanied with a wonderful delight. There we easily master designs; and, fighting only with the ideas of things, they will suffer themselves to be conquered by us and taken captives at our wills. But then, after all this, we must come out to the other part of executing and bringing forth, and there we find a stronger resistance. Then the faces of things are quite changed, and the soul falls into labour, and suffers the throes of travail. It is not the same thing for a merchant to think of a storm and to be driven with the fury of it. A tempest is not so frightful in the port as in the midst of the sea. Then it is that perhaps he repents of his voyage, and wishes that he was well at home again: or, at least, he could be content to be driven thither, and there think he had done nobly in venturing so far as he did upon the treacherous ocean. And so, truly, I cannot tell you how great the difference may be which you will find between yourself hereafter when you come to do these things, and yourself now when you are deliberating of them. We are now in a place of rest and peace; we speak of things absent, and discourse of objects afar off: when you and your enemies come to be upon the same spot, when you are engaged to do what you have in design, then you may not be the same man, nor find things in the same posture; but that may revolt and oppose you in the operation, which was compliant to you in thought, or did not so much resist you in meditation. Then you will find that you must wrestle stoutly with the difficulties that make head against you, and that they will put you to a greater proof of your valour and constancy than you might imagine. Then your case will be very bad, if you feel yourself more unwilling to proceed than now you are: if you must be combating your own will when you should set upon your enemies; if you must then be deliberating when you should be doing, and prevailing over yourself when you should carry the victory over your opposers. And if you should prove like our hypocrites, who think it is enough to resolve stoutly, and to make resistance, your affairs will still be in a worse condition: for then you will fairly go back, and sit down to comfort yourself with such thoughts as these; that you have gone far enough in under-

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taking a business of such difficulty, though you never effect it; and that it is an achievement glorious enough for this world, to set yourself against enemies so mighty, though they get the better of you. Thus flatterers have sometimes praised a prince's valour for having once put his horse into a rage, and extolled his courage for signing a treaty of peace with a great deal of regret.

That you may be constant therefore and powerful in your resolution; that not you, but your enemies may yield and leave you the victory; let me earnestly beseech you to represent all things which you now undertake both as truly and naturally, and as lively and strongly, as it is possible to your soul. Think that you are now issuing forth into the field of action: that at this moment you are in the agonies which you must expect: that just now when you are deliberating of these things, you feel all the contradiction and resistance that will be made. And for the better security of your resolution, it will be useful, if not necessary, to renew it every morning; and to go out of your chamber armed as a man that waits for his enemies. Vow your heart again unto God as soon as you open your eyes. Make a solemn protestation before him, that you mean to continue his faithful servant, and for no reason in the world to be false to your undertaking. Reproach to yourself the baseness and cowardice of which you have been at any time guilty; and swear to him over and over again your constant fidelity. Say with a great courage, I do here in the presence of God, and of my Saviour, and of all the heavenly host, devote all the forces of my soul to execute his pleasure. I renounce the world; I vow a pilgrimage to Jerusalem; I will wade through all difficulties; I will refuse no labours; I will beg my bread, so I may come safely thither. This I avow to be my mind; this I confirm and ratify again without any reservations, clauses or exceptions. I will never unsay it nor revoke it. I will never repent of this promise, or of any part of it. So help me, O my God. And here it will be seasonable to make your humble suit unto him, that he will be pleased to fortify your resolution too, and vouchsafe to aid you by the grace of his Holy Spirit. Represent to him that you are a poor pilgrim, who have undertaken a long journey for his sake, and forsaken all for no other end, but only to see him at Jeru-

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salem. And therefore tell him, you hope he will not suffer your design to miscarry; but that he will make you as valiant in your actions as through his goodness you are already in mind and heart: and that as you have chosen this way, so he will uphold your goings in his paths, that your footsteps slip not. Show him all your weaknesses, and how fearful you are of yourself. Tell him you are sensible the doing of his will is much different from knowing and purposing to do it. And therefore pray that he will lessen the difference, or take it quite away by his mighty power joined to you, that you may with as much certainty, if not with as much ease, do and effect as you have projected and resolved. In short, offer up your will to him all broken and contrite, that he may put it into what form and posture he pleases. Show him an heart that quits all interest in itself, and that would be only led and conducted by him. Let him see you standing quite out of your own will; purely indifferent to all things, but only the doing of his. Let him know that you mean never to call it back, or to resume it into your hands any more, though you might possess it of all the world thereby. And then sure he cannot abandon you, nor suffer any thing else to make a prey of that which is thus affectionately addressed unto him. It is not possible that he should refuse the offering you make him, nor can he throw away a heart which puts itself thus humbly and sincerely into his hands; for now it is in the place where he would have it, and it doth but answer the summons of surrender which he sent it. He doth not desire any thing more, than that you would thus resign and make over yourself to him, willing neither one thing or other but only this, that he would let you know what choice to make for yourself. Then you cannot be long ignorant of your duty, nor impotent neither; for your will being overcome, you will soon overmaster all other difficulties, either of knowing or doing the will of God.

CHAP. X.

Of leaving the world; and how thereby we recover our freedom.

And now having reduced things to this state, you may esteem yourself deserving the name of a pilgrim, who forsakes his house, his wife, his children, and all he hath: making

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himself poor and naked, that he may travel in his journey more lightly and merrily when there is nothing left that may prove an impediment unto him. It may seem perhaps a very beggarly condition; but let me tell you this before I go any further, that if you can thus sincerely part with all the world in heart and resolution, you have got possession of a thing which was never yours before, and is the greatest riches upon earth; I mean yourself. We tell men that it is their duty to take their hearts wholly out of the hands of the world, to let nothing claim such an interest in their affections that it should say, I am yours and you are mine: and this startles and affrights them; they think we are going to rifle their possessions, and rob them of all their goods. But if they did see things in a true light, and were not hoodwinked with their passion, they would thank us for our advice, and think that we come to restore them a treasure which they had lost, and indeed till now had never enjoyed.

You shall not take my word long for what I say; but you shall find before you have travelled very far, that you was never happy till you was loosed from those bonds whereby your heart was tied to worldly things; that you was never master of any thing till you was stripped stark naked of all your earthly affections. Now you will be your own man. Now you will be able to do as you will yourself, and to live according to your pleasure. You will now have the power to dispose of your time, and your thoughts, and all things else belonging to you, as you shall think good. You will have the liberty to keep yourself company; to entertain your Saviour when he comes to visit you; to enjoy God in quiet without any thing to disturb you; to converse with the other world as freely as you do with this. Whereas while your heart was chained to any of these things which I wish you to renounce, I appeal to you, whether you was not more theirs than your own. Was you not forced to go whither they would have you? Did they not draw you from yourself at their pleasure? Was you not bound to keep them company; to employ your time in their service and attendance? Did they not perpetually engross your thoughts, and solicit your desires, and exclude all things else besides themselves from having any place in your heart? In short, was you not ever from home, and did you not always

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live out of yourself? Let not your poverty then run in your mind, though it should be never so often objected to you, for you was never possessor of any thing till now; never rich till you became a pilgrim; never master of any thing till you was owner of yourself. Now you have recovered your freedom and your ease both together. Now you may do what you will, and you shall not suffer as you was wont. You can remember the torment, I believe, which you endured when any of those things were either lost or diminished, to which you had engaged your affections. You felt that if we love and cleave to any thing, we must be carried along with it. With all its changes (which in this uncertain world are not a few) we must suffer a change too. When it is in danger, we shake and tremble for fear. When it is impaired, we are wounded and cut at the heart for grief. When it is lost, we scarce know where we are, and cannot find ourselves. And in one word, we must follow the fortune of these worldly things if we be wedded to them; insomuch that there is no remedy but to sue out a divorce presently, because it is an unlawful marriage. See then what an happiness falls to your portion when this is once effected, and your interests come to be separated by parting you asunder. Now you will not be concerned in any of the mutations of the world. Now any thing in it may depart, and not be followed with your lamentations. And, to speak compendiously, there is nothing can go away from you, which shall carry you away too, but it will still leave you yourself behind.

Let me encourage you therefore to take the name and weeds of a pilgrim upon you as your honour; and to wear them as a glorious mark of your freedom. Though you have given your heart heretofore to the world, yet let it know that you do not intend to leave it in her hands: but presently call it back again, that you may bestow it upon a better Master. Do not we say that every Christian must give himself to God, and is it not that which I have now persuaded you to resolve? But how shall a man give that which he hath not? And he hath not himself, as I have proved, that hath let out his heart to the world. It is necessary then that you take it home again in order to your being his. You must be your own, that so you may give yourself to him. You must be restored into your own

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nand, that so you may have something to offer up to his uses. And did you never think in any sickness that you was near to the gates of death? I beseech you tell me whether it was not a great trouble to you to find yourself so much in the power of other things that you could not resign yourself to God? What misery is there like to this, to be so out of our own hands while we live, that we cannot yield ourselves to our Maker when he would have us die? to be tied so fast to other things, that we cannot go to him when he calls us? to feel that this thing holds us, and that pulls us, and the other even clasps about us, and says, You must not leave us? If there were nothing else to thrust you forward in your design, the thoughts of this misery would be a sufficient spur to you to quicken the execution of it. Restore yourself presently to liberty again, and be a servant of the world no longer; if it be but for this reason only, that you may be free to die. Leave the world as you found it: and seeing you must go naked as you came, do not stay for death to pluck off your clothes, but strip yourself, and owe your liberty to your own hands. It will not be long, you are well assured, ere that debt to nature must be paid; and then there cannot be a greater contentment, than to feel that you are your own at that hour: that you can dispose of yourself to God without any let or hinderance; and that you can die in the freedom wherein you were born. If you stand engaged to the world, it will be sure to put in its claim and challenge an interest in you at that time. It will let you know that it is your mistress, and still requires your service. And therefore follow your resolution and forsake it betime; that so it may not give you any trouble then, but suffer you to go out of it as quietly and with as little care as you came into it.

He spake these words with a great deal of heat, and with a tone expressing so much vehemency, that he could not have been more earnest if he had been disputing the liberty of his country with those who intended to betray it. But on a sudden repressing himself and letting his voice fall a little, he told him that he would spare the rest of his discourse on this argument for somebody that stood in greater need of it. For I perceive (said he) that I have now to deal with an heart that hath already begun its own deliverance, and whose weariness of the world's service hath brought it hither to find out a better

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master. Besides (added he), it will not be prudent, I think, to burden you with many things at once: and we are admonished also by the darkness which comes upon us, that it is time to take a short repast, and so commit ourselves to rest. I have an empty bed, which will be glad to receive a pilgrim, or any one that hath set his face toward Jerusalem, being dedicated long ago to Charity. And therefore if you intend to be ruled by me in all things, let me lay my injunctions upon you not to stir a foot to seek a lodging in any other place but in my house. It was a thing of no difficulty, you may easily think, to persuade a man to accept of that which he much desired, and had already prepared himself to beg. And therefore having made him his hearty acknowledgments for that offer, and for all the good counsels he had bestowed upon him, together with a promise to be obsequious to them, they sat down to a frugal supper; and a while after commending themselves to God, they parted and went to bed. I say, to bed; for they did not both betake themselves to rest; the poor stranger's mind being tossed with a thousand thoughts, and travelling all night very hard to Jerusalem. He had-no sooner put off his clothes but he thought that this was a lively emblem of the condition to which he was to be reduced: and it put him in mind how he ought to strip himself of all affections to the world. He took there a solemn leave of it, and bade it eternally farewell. And think not, said he, to meet me again in the morning, and that I will put on my love to you as I do my garments; no, I vow that I would go stark naked if the one could not be resumed without the other. Then he revolved in his mind all that he had heard of the way to Jerusalem, together with the difficulties therein; which, in the silent darkness of the night, he mused upon more deeply than perhaps he would have done at another time; there being a resemblance, he thought, between the darkness and the afflictions he was to endure, and between the silence and the patience he was to use. These and such like reflections succeeded so fast one upon another, that they would not suffer him to close his eyes till towards the morning light; when a weak slumber laying all his senses asleep, and chaining up his reason, left only his imagination at liberty to rove about. And it had not pressed many of the footsteps of things which his memory was imprinted withal, before the

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image of an ancient pious friend of his, dead long ago, and who had often persuaded him to quit the world, presented itself before him. He was clothed in white raiment, and his countenance was very bright; but he approached him with the very same smiles in his face wherewith he used heretofore to run into his embraces. This person he fancied he was going to meet as soon as he saw him come in at the door; but before he could stir, he thought he found him at his bed-side, praying him not to arise. For (said he) I must soon leave you, and am come only to express to you the joy I have to find you in this good man's house. Happy is he that hath met with a faithful guide; but far happier is he who follows his advice. Make not too much haste to be gone; stir not from hence till you be dismissed. And then I hope we may one day meet never to part again; but now I cannot be permitted to make a long stay with you. This sight, but especially his speech, gave him such a sentiment of joy, that he hath often since professed he never felt the like, nor had any power to describe it. Yet he wished afterward that it had been less; for it brought him out of his slumber, and, opening his eyes, chased away that fair idea, whose company he would fain have enjoyed a little longer. So agreeable was that object to him, and so delectable did it render that moment or two wherein it appeared, that his spirits were as much refreshed thereby as if they had been steeped all the night in the dews of sleep. Not hoping, therefore, nor wishing to have his eyes shut again (unless it were to behold that friend), he left his bed, and prepared himself to welcome his host, whom he heard already stirring, and calling up his servants. He comforted himself also with this pleasant thought, that he was awaked to see a friend, whose company he should not lose so soon, and in whose society he might rejoice without fearing to make him vanish out of his sight.

CHAP. XI.

He commends to the pilgrim two companions, Humility and Charity. Directs where to find them. With a large discourse of the former of them.

It was not long before the good man of the house came to give him the usual morning salutations, and to inquire how he

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had rested that night. But when he entered his chamber, he beheld such a joy in his countenance that it quite turned by that thought, and made him congratulate his cheerfulness; which he told him he took as a certain indication that his counsels had found a good acceptance, and were like to be pursued. His guest was willing that he should impute his pleasant aspect to that cause, and so told him nothing of his dream; fearing indeed that he might think him childish and superstitious, if he knew that he conceived so much joy from such slight appearances and shadows of comfort. But having expressed his great satisfaction in those preparatory discourses wherewith he had been pleased to honour him, he told him that the new day was not so welcome as himself, and that the hours seemed too sluggish, and the morning to make over long delay, to bring him the rest of the counsels which he expected from his mouth. You have given me a rare good morrow, replied the guide, and I have seldom met with such early joys: let us give thanks to God, therefore, for this happy beginning, and so qualify ourselves for the continuance of his favours. The poor pilgrim (for so he esteemed himself) embraced this pious motion with all his heart; and so, having joined together in their devout acknowledgments, the one prepared himself to speak, and the other to hear what further related to his intended journey to Jerusalem. And the sky being very clear, the earth having charged the air with no vapours at all, they were invited into the fields, at once to refresh their bodies with a walk, and their minds with good discourse. Considering also the security they should enjoy thereby from all the diversions that other company might give them, it was agreed that all the time he stayed there, if the weather were favourable, they should spend the greatest part of the day abroad. You will expect, perhaps, that I should set down at large the particulars of every day's conference, and tell you where the night broke it off, and with what circumstances it was renewed the next morning; but I fear that method would extend my narrative to too great a length: and therefore I shall content myself to give you a continued relation of the principal things which at several times entertained our pilgrim during his stay with this good man; whose charity would not suffer him to depart, till

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he was fully instructed in all things that concerned his safe passage to the city of God.

As soon, then, as they had the house on their backs, and were come into the open air, the guide began to speak unto him to this effect: I will not be so distrustful of your memory as to make a repetition of what hath been already said, but proceed to tell you, that having disposed your affairs in such sort as I have directed, and put yourself in good order for your journey, you must be sure to provide yourself of two companions to go along with you, which indeed you can never be without, whose names are HUMILITY and CHARITY[a]. The former of these will always keep you in a mean opinion of yourself; and the latter will raise you to an high esteem of God and your Saviour, breeding in you a passionate desire to be like to them, and a grateful resentment of all their kindness to you. And that you may not think I intend to put you upon some long search for them, I shall tell you, for your comfort, that you shall find them both lodged together in one place, from whence they never stir, but are always ready at hand to assist those that there seek for them. I know you are desirous that I should acquaint you where that is; and because I would save your pains as much as ever I can, I shall send you no further than yourself, if you still keep in mind that sentence which I told you would be of daily use, and which you requested to have explained; for in that you will be sure to meet them embracing one another in an inseparable conjunction. You do well, I hope, remember it; yet I cannot choose but repeat it to you, and wish you again and again to say, as affectionately as you are able, I AM NOUGHT, I HAVE NOUGHT, I DESIRE NOUGHT, BUT ONLY THIS ONE THING, WHICH IS OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND TO BE AT PEACE WITH HIM IN JERUSALEM. Humility says, I am nought, I have nought; and Love says, I desire nought but

[a] [Bishop Patrick has here followed closely the train of conception of that earlier work to which in his prefatory remarks he professes himself indebted:—

"Now then, since thou art in the safe way, if thou will speed in thy going, and make a good journey, it behooveth thee to hold these two things often in thy mind; Humility and Love: and often say to thy selfe, 'I am nothing, I have nothing, I covet nothing, but one,'" &c.—Scala Perfectionis, (book ii. part 2. chap. 3. p. 169. ed. 1659.) quoted in Sancta Sophia, tom. i. p. 47.]

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Jesus and Jerusalem. These two you may the better keep in your company, because you cannot lose either of them unless you will lose them both; (and who is there that would not at least have one friend to be of his society in his travels?) So lovingly they do agree together, that they are by no means willing to be asunder. If the one be admitted, the other will not be excluded; and as the one grows to a taller pitch, the other advances together with it. The more you humble yourself, the higher will your love ascend; and as that is exalted, so will you learn still lower to depress yourself. For the more you discern yourself to be nothing, with the greater ardency of affection will you embrace Jesus, who is desirous to make you something worth: and the more you admire and love him, and his incomparable perfections, the better still will you be able to take a view of your own nothing. And that is a thing which I think fit to observe to you before we pass any further, because it may be of great use to you in your pilgrimage: that the humility which I commend unto you is not to be exercised so much in a direct considering of yourself, your sinfulness and your misery, (though this be very profitable at the first,) as in a still, quiet and loving admiration of the excellent goodness, purity and love of Jesus. When you believe him to have the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him bodily, and especially when you are endued with a savoury feeling of his holiness and kindness; this sight of him will beget in your soul a more pure, spiritual and sweet humility than the beholding of yourself can possibly do, which produces an humility more gross, boisterous and unquiet. As there is a love which is calm and quiet, when, not at all stirred with the passion, we remain possessed of all the pleasure of it; so is there an humility of the same nature, which silently sinks us down to the very bottom of our being, without stirring and troubling of our souls, as we are wont to do when we violently plunge our thoughts into them. But both of these descend from above, when our minds are fastened to celestial objects, which always are in a serene tranquillity; they will not spring from things beneath, which are tossed in a perpetual and restless agitation. We never seem less in our own eyes than when we look down from on high upon ourselves: and being then in peace, we have less also of that vexation wherein our souls are apt to boil and

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rage when they are the nearest objects of our thoughts. Our humility will be the more when we admire Jesus; and it will be of a temper more mild and gentle, like him whom we admire. It will not lose any thing of itself by taking its original from him; but only lose that sourness which is mingled with it when it hath its beginning from ourselves. You will plainly understand my meaning, if you do but consider, that by fixing your eyes upon yourself, you may indeed discern that you are a most wretched, sinful creature: but by fastening them upon him, you will both see the same, and that more clearly; and moreover feel that you are a mere nothing. This sense of yourself, which lays you lowest of all other, you can never owe to any thing else but a sight of him who owes nothing. His fulness appearing so great, your emptiness will seem as vast; and in compare with his perfections, you will think yourself nothing but imperfection. When you consider that all is his, at that thought you have lost yourself, by finding that you are not your own: and when you think that he is the original of all, you are lost again in a sense that you had been nothing without him. So that in this way you will be as much cast down to the ground, and rolled as much in the dust, as by any other reflections. All the difference is, that you will not roll and tumble about in the turbulency of your own distracted thoughts, and the violent commotion of your furious passions. You will only lie at his feet in a lowly posture, adoring of his excellencies, praising his surpassing perfections, confessing your own meanness, beseeching him to pity a poor soul that thinks itself nothing, unless it may see him there; and desiring him to take the opportunity of doing himself that honour, and you that kindness, as out of his fulness to impart a new spirit and a divine nature to you. Nay, this humility will make you study to cast all other things out of your thoughts, and labour only to be beloved of him, without which you judge yourself to be of all creatures most miserable. It is not to be told what the benefits of this sort of humility are: but to let you see something of its great virtue, reflect upon that which we lately discoursed concerning the force of a strong resolution, and hearty surrender of yourself to God; which, as it contains all things you are to do within its comprehension, so it is supported by nothing more than a profound humility. When we

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consider that we were made by God, that we depend upon him every moment, that we are infinitely engaged to him for many millions of his favours; when we think what a sovereign authority he hath over us, how much he is superior to us, what a right he hath to all our services, and how wise and good his will is; it is impossible that we should avoid resolving to give him our hearts, and to persist eternally in the abnegation of our own wills and desires, which we can never suffer to be competitors with his. This humility will not be forward to clothe you with shirts of hair, to prescribe you no other diet but the meanest you can procure, to put a whip into your hand wherewith to let yourself blood, to rob you of your hose and shoes, that you may go barefoot to Jerusalem. It will not bid you strike your bare breast against the stones, nor tell you, that to be a saint, you must roll your naked body in the briars, or tumble in the same manner in heaps of winter snow, or plunge yourself up to the neck in an icy pool; but it will infallibly strip you of yourself, and starve all your carnal desires, and break your will in pieces, and lay you at the foot of the cross of Christ, and dispose you to all those rigours, and a thousand more, if your Lord did signify that he would be pleased with such austerities.

How safe then and secure must you needs think yourself under the conduct of such a companion! you cannot have a better guard, nor be put into a place of greater assurance, if you seek over all the world for it, than that to which humility will lead you. For making you distrustful of your own power and strength, it will urge you to a continual dependence upon your Lord, without whom you feel that nothing, much less such an excellent thing as you design, can be achieved. We accuse very much the weakness of our nature, we complain heavily of the body of flesh and blood, which continually betrays us; we conceit that we should do rare things, were we but once quit of this load of earth, and suffered to move in the free and yielding air. But let me tell you, and believe it for a truth, though we had no society with a terrestrial nature; nay, though our minds were free and clear from all mortal concretion; though we had no clothes at all to hinder our motion; yet our ruin might arise out of our spirits, and by pride and

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self-confidence we might throw ourselves down into utter destruction. For what commerce, I pray you, had the apostate angels with our corporeal nature? what familiarity with a body? Do we not conceive them to have been pure spirits separated from all earthly contagion? and yet by placing all in themselves, by being puffed up in their own thoughts, and not acknowledging their need of the divine presence and assistance, we conclude that they tumbled themselves into an abyss of misery and woe irrecoverable. Now they are in a worse condition than if they were spirits of a smaller size: now the torment they suffer is proportionable to the nobleness of their nature. For the sharper and quicker the mind is, and the greater its endowments are which it hath received, the greater mischief doth it bring upon itself, and the sadder are its perplexities when it is destitute of the special help and presence of God. As a great giant being blinded must needs tumble more grievously, and give himself sorer knocks than he would have done if he had not been of so huge a bulk; so a mind and reason elevated to an higher pitch than others is carried headlong into an heavier ruin, when it is deprived of that divine light which is necessary for its guidance and preservation. Excellency of nature therefore little profits, if God be not present with it; and he absents himself from all that place not their strength, sufficiency and safeguard in him, but in themselves. And on the other side, fragility of nature is not that which will undo us, if the divine presence do not withdraw itself, which it never doth from humble and lowly minds that confide in him and not in their own power; which, were it a thousand times greater than it is, would not be sufficient to conserve itself. Our pride, and vanity, and forgetfulness of God, then, is that which we must accuse; not the infirmity and craziness of our flesh: for as the excellency of the angelical nature could not save them when they disjoined themselves from their Creator; so the weakness of ours shall not harm us, if we keep close to him, and never sever ourselves from that heavenly power which worketh mightily in us. Do you not see then how much you must stand indebted to this associate in your journey? For it is humility that must fasten you to God, that will keep you in a constant adherence to him, and not let you stir a foot from him; that will make you tremble to think of looking into your-

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self, and not behold him there. This is in effect your strength and salvation; this supplies the defects of your nature; this is the remedy of your infirmity; and after a strange way this raises you above all the power of the world, by keeping you down, and pressing you very low in your own thoughts.

I must not defraud it therefore of those just praises that are due to its virtue, which may recommend it more to your affection, and make its company more grateful in your travels. But it is fit you should know that this humility, which makes us seem so little or nothing in our own eyes, is one of the most glorious things in the world, and places a man among the ancient heroes. It is indeed the height and sublimity of our mind, the true gallantry of our spirits. It letting us see what poor despicable things we are, causes us to surmount ourselves, and to have no regard to such low and petty interests as those of our own. It is not a sneaking quality, that dispirits the soul and deprives it of all its force and vigour, but a generous disposition of mind, that will not suffer it to employ its forces upon such a mean and contemptible service as that of pleasing ourselves. Let it not seem a paradox to you, for there is nothing truer, that pride and conceitedness are the qualities of base bred souls, of feeble and ignoble minds; and that lowliness is the endowment of a soul well born, nobly descended, and bravely educated in the knowledge of the most excellent things. For whether is greater, I pray you, he that sets a value upon little trifles, or he that despises them? Is not he that despises them? whose thoughts are taken up with sublimer objects, that make himself and all things here besides appear as nothing in his eyes. I believe you will say there was not a greater man in the world in those days than Moses, a leader of a mighty people, the captain general of all the pilgrims of that age, who had wrought wonders in Egypt, who had signalised himself by the drowning of Pharaoh's army in the sea[f]: and yet it is apparent there was not a meeker person living upon the earth; no man had a meaner opinion of himself. He was content to be taught by Jethro, though he knew so much himself; nay, he was not offended at his reprehension, but submitted his judgment to a better reason. Could there be a greater instance

[f] V. Chrys. in 1 Cor. i. 3. [tom. x. p. 6.]

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of his humility and gallantry both together? He that had overcome so many, now overcame himself. He that had triumphed over mighty hosts, now leads his pride in triumph, and tramples it under his feet. He cared not who had the honour of it, so wise and great things were effected. His own glory he valued not, but his humility inspired him by all means to seek the people's good. What think you of Abraham also, a more ancient pilgrim than this? who calls himself but dust and ashes; who condescended so far as to pray Lot, a person inferior to himself, that there might be no difference between them. And yet this was that great man who had overcome so many kings in battle, and brought away so many spoils, and redeemed Lot himself from captivity. Hath not his humility rendered him more famous than those victories? Hath he not crowned himself with greater glory in not vaunting himself in those trophies, than if he had been served continually by those conquered princes? If one man thinks clay to be clay, and therefore treads upon it; another thinks it to be gold and therefore admires it; which of these hath the braver mind? Hath not he who doth not admire the clay and embrace the dirt? So he truly that calls himself but dust and ashes hath certainly a very great soul; while he that understandeth not, but hath himself in admiration, is a weak and basely minded man. He hath a great spirit who makes no account of those things which others are proud of. He is generous who despises things far greater than those which others esteem the marks of their glory: who doth not swell with high achievements when his envious neighbours are puffed up with every trifle. Humility then, you see, is not sheepiness, but loftiness of mind and the most elevated pitch of the soul. It is not dejectedness of spirit, but a raised understanding of God and of ourselves. And therefore let us be low (as one of the ancient guides of the church advises) that we may be high. If we admire any thing here, let it be the sublimity of humble minds.

I cannot conclude before I add, for your further incitement, that humility is of an excellent good nature, and hath a singular obligingness in its constitution. It makes us no less acceptable unto men than unto God, and renders us amiable, though we have nothing else to give us any advantage. Do you

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not see how intolerable the proud are? and what is the reason of it but because they scorn those who are not of their rank? They cannot be obliged because they think whatsoever you do is due to their merit. They would be loved by all without loving again: they will command in all companies, and have every one yield to their humours: they will teach all, and learn of none: they are incapable of gratitude, and think you are honoured enough for your services if they do but receive them: they would draw all to themselves, and are unacquainted with that which charms all the world, I mean bounty and liberality. The humble man, no doubt then, is the most agreeable person upon earth; whom you oblige by a good word, which he thinks he doth not deserve: who thanks you for the smallest courtesy: who had rather obey than rule: who is desirous to learn of the meanest scholar: who contemns nobody but himself: who loves, though he be not loved: who thinks nothing too much to do for those that esteem him; and who is afraid he hath never recompensed enough the civilities which are done unto him. In short, this humility is of such great value and so good natured, that there is nothing comparable to it but its twin sister, divine charity [b]. This amiable pair are like the right foot and the left by which the traveller performs his journey. There needs no more but this happy couple to carry you through all the paths of piety, and bring you safe to Jerusalem. Let us turn our eyes then, if you please, from the one to the other, and look a while upon the beauty and graces of charity, whose charms are so powerful that you cannot choose but open to it your embraces.

CHAP. XII.

Of divine charity. The power that it hath both to establish his resolution and furnish him with all other requisites for his journey.

And that which will very much enamour you at the first glance is the power which you will discover in it to establish your resolution, and to make it so firm that it shall not be shaken by all the force of all the world, which is nothing so

[b] [Jeremy Taylor has some very similar remarks in his "Measures and Offices of Friendship,"—Works, vol. i. p. 83.]

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strong and mighty as love. I know this touches you with a strong inclination to it, if you have any mind to offer your will to God as I advised; and therefore you will not think I importune you with a tedious discourse if I make you more sensible of this following truth: that love makes one will of two, and causes us to sacrifice all our own desires to the will of that we love, if we esteem it better than ourselves. For what, I pray you, can we say of Love, but which a wiser man than you or I hath told us, who calls it 'that emotion of the soul whereby we join ourselves in will and heart to that which is presented as lovely and convenient for us?' It is such a consent, I say, of the heart to some fair and inviting object, that we consider ourselves as joined and united to it: insomuch that we do not look on ourselves and it as remaining any longer two things which subsist asunder, but we conceive a whole, whereof we think ourselves but one part, and the thing beloved to be the other. Is it not necessary then that we have a mind to cleave to this, and eternally live in dear embraces of it? Can we endure the thought of being torn from this, and so dissolve the whole which love hath made? Do not we naturally desire to conserve things, especially those of our own creating? It is unavoidable then that, in any contest which may arise between these parts, we yield to the will of that we love for fear of a separation, unless that thing be worse than ourselves, and so we hope to gain by the dissolution. If one of these two must be displeased, we shall ever choose that it be ourselves, unless we esteem the other to be of less value and worth than ourselves. There is but that one exception lies against this general truth, which I shall not stick to reiterate, that love doth so tie us to that we love, that we and it become but one whole consisting of two parts; and that we shall sooner suffer that part which we make to be crossed in its desires, than the other to which we have joined ourselves to be disgusted. Do you doubt of it? Observe then, that love being placed on things that differ in three degrees, it comes to be divided into three sorts. Either it is to things below us, and then it is called a bare Affection; or to things equal to us, and then it is termed Friendship; or to things above us, and then it arrives at the name of Devotion. Thus I have learnt from a wise man of my acquaintance. Now the nature of love in every one of these being such that it joins

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our hearts to the thing beloved, and we and it make but one whole: in this only they differ, that though we may consent to part, and break with that which we esteem less than ourselves, yet we can never agree to be separated from that which we esteem greater. The less part will always be abandoned to the conversation of the greatest; we must always sacrifice that which is worst, to keep entire the best. And therefore, though in bare affection a man always prefers himself before that he loves, when one must suffer a displeasure, yet it is quite otherwise in the highest love, (and sometime in the second sort,) which we call devotion, for there a man prefers the thing he loves so much before himself, that he fears not to venture his very life for the conservation of it. He will sooner sever soul and body than consent that this and his soul should be divided. He will rather quit all the world, and never see it more, than forsake this and be banished from it: because, as there is no compare, he thinks, between all the world and this, so he is tied with an incomparably stronger bond to it than to all the world. Now of this sort is the love that we call *charity*, which is an high devotion to our Lord: who, since he is Lord of all, the Lord of life and glory, the *Author of eternal salvation*, the *only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth*, if it were possible for us to leave some things that are better than ourselves, in expectation of something better than them, to which we will give that love which they have lost; yet he will make us love him eternally above all, and live in inseparable union with him, because there is nothing else superior to him on which to bestow our love if we take it from him. If we once sincerely love him, if we become one with him, it is manifestly in the nature of this sublime affection to make us part with ourselves for his sake: to resign up all our own desires that his will may be done; to lose whatsoever we call ours, that we may keep him and his good esteem of us. It is not possible that we should grant our consent to have that knot untied, which makes us part of such a whole whereof the Son of God is the other part. There needs nothing to keep it fast but to keep us in our wits. And therefore, since a will distinct from his will makes us two again, we shall always compromise with his will that we may continue one.

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I believe now you think you shall make a mighty purchase, if you can but procure this companion to go along with you. It is apparent to you, that this Charity will help and enable you to do all that is commanded you, though it be never so much, and hard to be otherwise effected. And do you not think that it will make all things easy also to be done? Alas! it knows no difference between doing and suffering, but only this, that it chooses the latter many times as a noble testimony to its sincerity and truth. Nothing will seem absurd, nothing will be thought misbecoming, nothing will appear difficult, when once you are in love. It is well compared to an artificial glass, which when we look through, an enemy seems a friend, disgrace is rendered an honour, and hardships look like a pleasure. The love of Christ, you know, caused him to make himself of no reputation. It preserved his majesty, and made it seem no disparagement to be so low as a servant, and to court his vassals. It hath this privilege, that it cannot be defamed; and it hath this generosity, that it cannot learn to deny. Ask any thing of it, and it will make no difficulty to give it. Nay, ask a coat, and it will give the cloak also. Ask it to go a mile with you, and it will go two. Ask it to forgive one injury, and it will forgive an hundred. Ask it to render you a service, and it will serve you with its whole self. So that I think one of the ancient guides of the church had reason, who said, "Love, and do what thou wilt:" take thine own course, so that thou dost but heartily love. This is a thing so powerful, that it withstands our temperament, and resists our most natural inclinations. It claps a new bias upon our hearts; it carries us against the stream and tide of sensitive desires; it breaks the chains of custom; it roots up inveterate habits; it is of such vast force, that it makes us vanquish ourselves, and obliges us to destroy our own pleasures, that we may please another. It is strangely bountiful and liberal withal, thinking it can never do enough to make itself known to those whom it loves. From whence it is, that whereas they who live only in a fear and dread of God have starved and half dead affections to him, which makes them do but little, and that with a pensiveness and sadness, as if they desired to be excused; they whose hearts burn with love to him have all their powers excited thereby to do their best for him; and they strain themselves

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with the greatest gladness to execute his pleasure in all things. And, to say the truth, there is no passion of the soul but love hath it at its full command. They all owe their original to love, and would have no being at all if it were not in the soul before them. If there were no love implanted by God in our natures, there would be no desire, no hatred, no grief, no joy, no fear, no despair; for all these grow upon this single root, or rather are but love shooting forth in divers shapes. They are, I say, but several motions which love causes; the different figures which it assumes, according as the object and occasion requires. It is love which desires when the thing is absent; which hates that which would spoil its enjoyments; which grieves for the loss or fears the departure, which despairs of the coming or joys in the presence, of a beloved good. What therefore should that be which love cannot do, seeing it carries all these along with it, and leads the whole soul thither whither it goes itself? It is an active and busy affection, having as much vivacity as it hath strength. Its life consists in motion, and, like to the heart, it ceases to live when it ceases to stir. It is painted, you know, with wings, and will make you fly rather than go to Jerusalem. It is like to fire, which is both a greedy and a fierce element: a very covetous affection, I mean, that thinks it never hath enough of that which it desires; and so earnest and vehement, that it never rests till it hath spent itself upon its beloved. It is like the holy fire which God sent from heaven, which was found unextinguished at the return from Babylon (as the Hebrews say) in the bottom of a well, all covered with mud and dirt[c]. Much water from without cannot quench it; and the dulness and heaviness of our own temper cannot repress it. But as fire elevates the matter to which it takes, though it be never so gross and ponderous; so doth love raise the hearts wherein it makes an impression, and stirs them up to actions far surmounting their age, their breeding and condition. There is a certain cheerfulness also in this affection, like to the shining and brightness of fire, which contributes much to the augmenting of its activity. It diffuseth a secret joy through the whole soul, which cannot be dissembled, but casts a splendour into the countenance of those in whom it resides. Though melancholy indeed is sometimes the com-

[c] [See 2 Macc. i. 22; and Joseph Ben Gorion, de Hist. Jud. lib. i. cap. 21. p. 62.]

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panion of other love, yet it cannot find so easy access to divine charity; for that which the one wants the other hath, and that which the one doubts of the other necessarily supposes. Is not this the common cause of such sadness, that love meets with no return from an heart to which it hath given its own, or is in despair of overcoming all the obstacles of its satisfaction? But these are things that cannot find a place in this heaven-born affection, which is nothing else but a return of our love to God; who hath loved us first, and thereby given us assurance that he is desirous to be enjoyed by us. All the heaviness then of pious souls is when they cannot make such returns as they wish, not when they feel this flame within them; for then they are strangely pleased and ravished with joy, both because it is an effect of the love of God to them, and because hereby they do actually enjoy him. Now as melancholy and sadness do oppress the spirits, and make us lazy and unwilling to stir; so this cheerfulness and lightsomeness of mind which love infuses do set them free, and render us active and vigorous in our motion. Melancholy is a lethargic humour, and binds up all the powers, because its frozen disposition imagines all things impossible to be either done or avoided: but cheerfulness, by its heat and warmth, gives us some degree of confidence that things are not so hard to be undertaken; and it thaws, melts, and loosens our faculties into freedom and liberty, whereby we become of a lively, forward, and ready disposition. Love, therefore, being of this pleasant and cheerful nature, you see, must needs both quicken your spirit and facilitate your work: nay, it is apt to excite and inspire others who come near us, and therefore much more ourselves. Cheerfulness, and the love from whence it springs, makes our countenance smooth and clear, and invites others into our society. When this passion stirs in the heart, the face is all over touched with the sweetness of it, which both entices and enlivens those that approach us. How is it possible, then, that we should not feel these effects of it ourselves, that are so sensible to others? or what heart is there so cold and indifferent, that would not be possessed with this affection, which is as useful as delightful, and whose benefits redound to our neighbours, and stay not in ourselves? It will not let us be a terror to our own souls, nor appear with such a dismal aspect that we should scare and affright others. It will not drive others from piety, while it

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carries us unto it. It will not suffer us to put religion on the rack that we may look severe: and it is far from making us appear so, as though we imagine we could not be saved unless we make an ugly face.

What shall I say more? Need I tell you that love is full of imitation, and forces us to conform ourselves to the humour and disposition of him whom we love? There is a stranger property by far than this, which will make you open your heart to it; and that is a singular sagacity which it is master of, whereby it knows what is fit to be done without any teaching. If you were fully in the power of it, it would go near to render me of no use, being itself instead of twenty masters. It knows what will please before it be told, and sees what is acceptable without a director. It hath eyes of its own to find out its way, and by its innate wisdom would lead you straight to Jerusalem. It is very skilful to spy out its duty, and hath a quick perception of what is befitting in every passage of life: insomuch that when a man begins to love he begins to know how to guide himself. His love will suggest unto him many things which he ought to do, and be instead of a thousand monitors to put him upon the doing of them. It will make a man descry the least faults in himself, though it hide them in others. It notes an undecency with as much severity as another marks a gross impurity. It labours to overcome the smallest infirmity, and weeps more for a mote in its eye than others do for a beam: nay, it is afflicted for those things which nobody sees save only itself. It blushes more for a vain thought than the rest of the world do for a monstrous act. It hath a curiosity about those little circumstances which all men are wont to oversee or neglect. Its niceness and delicacy is so great that it abhors the very shadow of all evil. And it every way strives to adorn itself with such accuracy, that there may not be the least speck to render it less fair and beautiful in the eyes of God.

Love therefore, I beseech you, love as much as ever you are able, if you mean to be happy. Make your heart ready, as an altar, for this fire from above to descend upon it. Prepare yourself as a sacrifice to be offered up in this holy flame to the

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Lord of love. Let all the world know that you are a consecrated thing; tell it that you cannot entertain its suit, nor unhallow the place where heaven is pleased to dwell. Yield yourself a captive to this mighty conqueror, whereby you will be enabled to conquer all things else. Subject yourself to the power of that which will bring the devil, the world, and the flesh under your feet. Let it take away your liberty of doing what you please, that it may make you free to do as you ought. Possess it of your soul entirely, and suffer it to inspire all your desires, and to order all your motions; and it will not fail to possess you of that blessed place to which you wish to be conducted. And is this any difficult thing that I require of you? I should rather think that we are highly obliged to God for making the way to Jerusalem so easy, and our arriving there so certain as it is. For love is the most natural and pleasant thing in the world which will certainly bring us thither, and God being so lovely, and having loved us so much, one would think it should be an easy thing to beget it in our hearts. Do you not mark how a dog loves you if you do but throw him a bone or some such thing, which to you is of no use or worth at all? For this he fawns upon you; for this he stays in your house, and keeps your door, and defends your goods; this makes him follow you at the heels, if you please, to travel with you long journeys, to forsake all other masters for your service, and many times to die with you: though it be a poor thing, which you know not what to do withal, unless you cast it unto him. How can you choose then but love Jesus, and be at his command, and follow his steps, and leave all others for his sake, and even give your life to him? which hath given you not a thing of no value, not that which cost him nothing, or that which he could not tell what to do withal, but himself, his holy blood, his precious promises, which it cost an infinite deal of pain to seal and ratify unto you. Are you still insensible of his favours when you think of this? Are you still to learn to love, when such a weight of love as this doth press your heart? If such a thought could enter my mind, I would send you to the brutes to be their scholar; I would call your spaniel, and bid him teach you; I would cease to be your instructor any longer, and put you there to learn the affection you owe to your dearest Lord and Master. But your blushes bid me

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spare this language, and seem to assure me both that you are ashamed to owe your virtue to such examples, and that you feel already this flame enkindled in your heart. Feed it, I beseech you, continually, and let it increase unto greater ardours of love, as it will infallibly, if you do but consider what great things your Saviour hath done for you, and that he is still busy in procuring your good; and, in short, that there is not an hour, not a moment wherein you do not stand indebted to him for eternal blessings, or for the means of them, or for the grace to help you to attain them.

And indeed the poor pilgrim's heart did beat at such a rate that it seemed to knock against his ribs. He was set all on fire with these words, and at last found means to vent himself, and burst out in such expressions as these. O, sir, what have you done? I feel the love of Jesus burn so vehemently in my breast that I shall be devoured by it if it last a moment longer in this force. I have scarce any breath left to tell you that you have made me love yourself also with a violent passion. I have no power no more than desire to resist this Almighty Lover of souls. I render myself his prisoner, and wish to be eternally held in his chains. You have linked me to yourself too so fast, that I am at once become his slave and your servant. I would go to the world's end to seek these two companions, humility and charity, if they were not already become my guests by your means. You have given me a greater treasure than I thought to find in those few words which I received from you; and methinks I feel already that I AM NOUGHT, AND I HAVE NOUGHT, AND I DESIRE NOUGHT BUT JESUS AND JERUSALEM. If it be not absurd to speak in such terms, I am in love with this Love which you have described. I see, methinks, humility and all things else in its arms. I embrace them both with all my soul. I welcome them with my best affections into my heart. And if I had more hearts than one, I would offer them all to the humble love of my sweetest Saviour. Go on, sir, as long as you please, if you have not taught me all my lesson in teaching me to love. You have tied my ears to your tongue, and they cannot but listen to your speech. Nor shall I ever feel any weariness in hearing of

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you, for you have made me in love with your discourse by breathing the love of my Lord into my heart.

Here he making a little rest, the guide had leave to resume his office; though he was so filled with joy to see the good effects of what he had said, that it was not easy on a sudden to find room for any other thoughts. The desire also that he felt of speaking something extraordinary on this occasion had like to have imposed silence on him and denied a passage to his words. But his prudence telling him how necessary it was to keep himself now from such transports, he soon reduced himself to his usual temper, and thus began to renew his discourse. It is no wonder to find that Jesus captivates hearts, and that the love of a dying Saviour is so powerful as to enthral them to his service. All that surprises me is no more than this, that such feeble words as mine should so sensibly touch your inclinations to him, and with such speed excite so high a degree of love in your heart. It gives me great encouragement to continue my instructions, and affords no less encouragement to yourself to continue your attention; for if you are already under the power of love by what hath been now delivered, I shall make you love unmeasurably before I have finished this discourse. You have seen but half of the riches of that golden sentence, and there are greater secrets still behind in those two precious words which are at the conclusion of it. For, I pray you, satisfy me in this demand: Have you well considered what Jerusalem is, to which you now direct your face? I will not stay for your answer, but proceed to tell you that I am now going to give you such an idea of it, that, if you keep it fresh in your mind, you cannot imagine how it will snatch you from the world, and heighten your love unto your Saviour, and lift you quite out of your own will if you had a mind to fall into it back again. And, truly, I cannot think that you should have any great list to travel long, or that you should not soon feel a weariness to invade your members, if you go you know not whither, and carry not along with you a true information of the happy repose you are like to meet withal at your journey's end. Let Jerusalem then be the subject of our next discourse, and suffer your eyes to be drawn to that blessed

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place, which, I believe, you have often heard commended as the perfection of beauty, and the joy of the whole earth.

CHAP. XIII.

A description of the city Jerusalem; and of the happiness he should there meet withal.

I HAVE no faculty (it must be confessed) of making good descriptions of those places which I have seen; and therefore it must not be expected that I paint you exactly a place which I know but by report. It is sufficient that I tell you nothing but the truth, and do not imitate them who fill their maps with chimeras of their own brain; though I do not completely delineate every part of it, but leave many spaces void to be filled up by yourself when you shall have the happiness to arrive there. Know then, that as to the situation of this city, it is agreed by all to be incomparably sweet, beyond the fairest place that this world of our's doth afford: for it is seated on a very high mountain, loftier than Olympus itself; which yet is said to lift its head above the clouds, and to be obnoxious to none of our storms and tempests; and to be deprived of the sunbeams by nothing else but only the night itself. It is advanced, I say, far above the highest part of this heavy earth and foggy air, aspiring into the purer sky; where the sun never withdraws its rays, and where there is not the least shadow of mist or vapour, either to obscure its light or to offend the most delicate sense that can be conceived. There are nothing but pure and fragrant odours which perfume that happy climate; there is a perpetual calm and quiet which reigns in that noble region; there is no noise but that which infinitely delights and charms the soul into still and quiet meditations. But that which is of greatest remark and most to be remembered is the glorious prospect which a place of this advantage yields. All the world here presents itself before one's eyes, and makes them the centre in which the beauty and glory of it conspires to meet. I would not have you think I mean a world so small as that which we inhabit upon this globe of earth, but one which comprehends the sun, and moon, and all other adjoining

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orbs, which are there beheld to move in comely measures about that prince of lights. Those balls of fire also, which you see fixed in the firmament so remote from you, will fall into your better view; who, though they seem here but like blinking candles and sickly flames, will there appear most noble lights, designed for some greater end than to lend us a feeble comfort in the night. It will be infinitely contenting to see the beauty and fair proportions of every part of this vast frame; the fitness, usefulness, and correspondence of it to all the rest of its neighbouring parts, together with the exact and admirable order of the whole. And can you imagine into what transports it will cast your soul to hear the praises of the Creator sung by all his works of wonder? and yet that is another privilege of this blessed place, by the advantage of whose holy silence you will receive the cheerful hymns wherewith every creature you behold doth celebrate the wisdom, power, and goodness of him that made it. You have heard (no doubt) of the music of the spheres, which, they say, would ravish souls from these mortal bodies, should it but strongly touch their ears; and therefore is almost drowned by the noise and clatter of this lower world. This is it which I am now commending to you, that sweet consent which all creatures make among themselves, that rare harmony which there is in the motion of all the heavenly orbs; which strikes the mind so agreeably, that one cannot choose but dance for joy together with them. But it is the proper entertainment of those who dwell in that still region, in which alone it can be distinctly heard; and where an everlasting song to the Creator of all doth melt their hearts to join in consort with that universal harmony.

But yet the place is nothing so considerable as the persons that inhabit it; nor will it be so useful to draw their pictures curiously as to describe their life and manners. Inquire not therefore of the vastness of this place, the stateliness of its buildings, the riches of their furniture, and such like things; but know that it is the city of the great King; the seat of the imperial Majesty of heaven and earth; the place where the Lord and Governor of the whole world, *whose dominion is an everlasting dominion*, and who reigns through all generations,

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keeps his court. Do you not think it will be a pleasing amazing sight to behold the majesty of his glory? Or, what greater happiness can you wish, if you were to be the disposer of your own fortune, than alway to stand before the Sovereign of the world as one of his ministers and attendants; and to live in his blessed presence as one whom he highly favours?—to behold the wisdom of his government, the righteousness and goodness of his laws, the admirable contrivance of all his works, the universal care which he takes of all his creatures, the infinite extent of his providence, and the power of his authority, whereby he doth whatsoever he pleases in heaven and earth, and sea, and all deep places?—to see how he brings those things together which were removed far asunder; and dissolves the combinations and confederacies of those things which were closely united?—to contemplate how he hereby makes those designs abortive which were just bringing forth, how he disappoints the devices of the crafty, and confounds all the subtlety of the world, and catches it in its own snares? It will strangely transport you to see the beauty of his holiness, the splendour and brightness of his understanding, the largeness of his love, his uncorrupted justice, his unexhausted goodness, his immovable truth, his uncontrollable power, his vast dominions, which yet he fills with his presence, and administers their affairs with ease, and is magnified and praised in them by the throng of all his creatures. These things I will leave to your own private thoughts, that I may have time to speak of the rest of the celestial inhabitants, but especially of the King's Son, who is a principal ornament (if I may speak in so low a phrase) and a great glory to this place. And of him I shall need to tell you no more than this, that in his person there is to be seen at once the most illustrious Lover and Warrior that ever was. His conquests have been innumerable. His victories no history but one of his own inspiring is able to recount. He hath trodden down the most potent and giantly enemies. He hath triumphed over the powers of earth and air. He hath trailed the greatest tyrant that ever was seen at his chariot wheels. And there is one universal triumph of his over all things still behind, wherein there will be special marks of honour set on all the citizens of Jerusalem who are to bear a part in it; which will astonish and ravish all their hearts with admiration, love and

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joy. This will be the most splendid show, the most illustrious appearance that ever the sun saw: for all angels, and all men, all that ever have been, are, or shall be, will there be summoned to attend in some sort or other upon the pomp of that great day. Then all the citizens of Jerusalem will be seen with crowns of gold on their heads, which this great Prince will bestow upon them; then they will appear on the theatre of the world as so many kings reigning together with him; and then all the heavens will ring with shouts of joy and praise to him that redeemed them, as they march along in his train through the air to Jerusalem. For, as I told you, he is the most glorious Lover that ever was: and the greatness of his valour and courage doth not at all extinguish his noble flames. He is owner of the most tender heart that ever was in any breast; and hath rendered himself redoubtable to his greatest enemies by nothing more than this, that he hath won so many hearts, and triumphed over so many brave souls, who were vanquished by nothing else but the power of his mighty love. Such a generous Lover he was, that though he was rich, he became poor, that they on whom he had set his heart might be made rich. He laid aside the robes of his glory, that they might be invested with them. He took upon him the shape of a servant, that he might prefer them to be the sons of God and heirs of a kingdom. And at last he voluntarily, and without any compulsion but that of his love, died upon a cross to save the lives of those who were so far from having any resentments of love to him, that they had the hearts of most desperate enemies against him. For you must know, that he is such a Lord of love, that the hatred and malignity of men could not extinguish the fervours of his passion. All the discourtesies they could do him were not able to prevail with him to lay aside his thoughts of kindness toward them. The innumerable affronts which he received could not make him go back to heaven, and forsake this ill-natured world, till he had expressed all the love conceived unto it. No, he died for those who took away his life. His bowels yearned toward those who were ready to rake into them with their bloody hands. His heart burnt with affection to those wretches that cruelly pierced it, and thrust it through with a spear. And therefore I cannot but think you would have a mind to take a journey to Jeru-

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salem, and judge your pains and travel well bestowed, if it were for nothing else but to see this illustrious person; especially to behold him in all his glory, and his highest exaltation, who is the patron of all good souls, the great protector of all pilgrims, the guide and rest too of all noble travellers; and who bears a particular affection to yourself; who hath suffered so much for you, who hath sent you so many messages of his love, who hath endeared himself to you by a thousand favours, and was never contented till he brought you to himself, that you might be there where he is, and behold the glory which his Father hath given to him. There he intends to entertain all pious men with an everlasting supper, to make them a never-ceasing jubilee; and treat them with such sumptuous magnificence, that there will not be tongues enough among them all to publish his praises, and their own thankfulness. Only you must remember, that the entertainment he will give them is himself, and that they will feast eternally upon his blessed face. Their happiness will be to see God, to behold the glory which is given to our Lord; that is, to know him, and to be filled with his wisdom, love and likeness.

And here, lest I should not be understood, and you should imagine the happiness of seeing God and his Son to be less than it is, let me stop a while to explain this part of my description to you, before I pass unto the rest. You must not then conceive that the pleasure of Jerusalem is to sit whole ages, and merely to gaze upon the Divinity; or that they who enjoy the repose of that happy place do nothing else but feed their eyes with the beauties of our Saviour's face: no, these are the fancies of low and uninstructed minds, who know no higher enjoyments than those of sense. To see God will be to have such a knowledge of him as gives our hearts a powerful touch, and strikes them with such a lively sense of him, that he turns them perfectly into his nature, and transforms them into the likeness of his divine excellencies. This glorious object doth, as I may so speak, diffuse and spread itself all over enamoured souls, and by a living heat doth animate them into the same disposition with itself. The beauty on which they fix their eyes doth imprint its own form upon their hearts, and makes them fair and beautiful with the same lovely qualities which

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they delight to behold. They do not busy themselves there, as men imagine, in gaping upon the splendour and the many ornaments of that place, but they themselves become a part of its glory, and are changed into that on which they fasten their eyes. They do not spend their time only in looking upon God, and curiously prying into him, but they receive him into their hearts, and he enters into their souls. He doth not guild them with his beams, but they themselves become light in the Lord. There is not a glory only cast about them, but they receive such rays of light from his face, as dart into their very hearts, and shine through their whole souls, so that they also become luminous and bright. They are so ravished with his goodness, that they are made good. They are so affected with his wisdom, that they become wise. The sense they have of his incomparable purity renders them more holy; and his dear love so overmasters their souls, that they conform in all things to his heart's desire, and it seems as if both their hearts had but one and the same motion. In short, my meaning is, that they are not happy at Jerusalem by any external enjoyment of God, (which is all the vulgar conceit doth reach, when we speak of seeing his glory,) but they are inwardly moved by a powerful efflux from him, which quickens them into the same thoughts, will and desire with himself. Their souls are not outwardly painted with him, and some colours, as it were, of his wisdom and goodness laid upon them; but they are rendered living images of God, and really changed into a true resemblance of that which they behold. It is not some glory that appears before them which makes them blessed; but they are made all glorious within, and become themselves God-like creatures. They do not behold the divinity only without themselves, but they see God within them, and looking into their own souls, there they find him, and are happy in him. And let me add this by the way, as I pass to other things, that such a knowledge and participation of God you must pursue in this world, if you mean to come to Jerusalem. You must here be partaker of a divine nature, and now be *transformed by the renewing of your mind, proving what is that good, and perfect, and acceptable will of God.*

But I think it is time to lead you to other spectacles which

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are worthy your sight, and to tell you, that in this city all the glorious ministers of state to the King of kings have their mansion-houses and noble palaces. All the heroes of ancient days do here make their abode. Nay, all the spirits of just men that are made perfect do here inhabit, and have their constant residence. And all those glittering angels, and those brave minds that ever flourish in this heavenly court, I believe you will think sufficient of themselves, if there were nothing else, to render this a very splendid place. The laws indeed of which are such that none can be permitted to live there but noblemen, persons of high birth and illustrious descent; for they are all called the *sons of God*. But that which gives them this nobility, and stamps such an honourable title upon them, is not such poor things as swell the men of our world into an airy and imaginary greatness; but the height of their minds, the purity of their hearts, and the excellent qualities wherewith they are endowed, which entitle them to the kindred of God. Insomuch that the meanest pilgrim on the earth that is found worthy, by reason of his virtuous disposition and generous spirit, to be admitted a citizen of Jerusalem, instantly becomes noble, and is enrolled among the princes of heavenly progeny. Into this blessed society, then, when once you are received, how delightful, do you think, their company and acquaintance will prove! Are you not highly pleased, now, with a rare history, and could you not lend your ears for a whole day to hear the adventures of some one famous person? And yet these are nothing to the pleasures that they can entertain you withal. There were never such things yet reported as the inhabitants of Jerusalem will be ready to impart and communicate with you: who can tell you a long story of the love of God, and make a never-ceasing relation, an endless history, of all the rare passages of his providence throughout the whole world. They can present you with a thousand Abrahams, and as many Josephs, whose adventures were so strange, that fiction is not able to invent any thing so surprising. Nay, out of those countries where you thought there was nothing but horrid deserts, savage souls, and barbarous customs, they may produce you many worthy minds, whose renowned acts it will give you an infinite joy to have rehearsed.

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But there is nothing, I believe, will touch you with a greater inclination to their converse, than the knowledge of the singular love and friendship that is between all the inhabitants of that city: provided you be already touched with any sense of the pleasure of that noble passion. They are a people, I told you, of the most excellent nature, and the sweetest disposition in the world. They are void of all deceit and guile, of all hatred and envy, of all covetousness and self-love, of all anger and peevishness, with whatsoever other things there be that ditsurb our peace and spoil our converse here below. So that they make the most agreeable society that ever was, and interchange to each other such pleasures as my tongue hath not expressions powerful enough to paint them forth. There is no strangeness at all among them. You can meet nobody there, but they will entertain you with as much kindness and sincerity as if they had known you many years. And when many come together in one place, there is no danger of their jarring, by reason of their different sentiments; but they bring a great addition of pleasure, and make the most delicious harmony that ever moved the heart of man. There they entwine in the dearest embraces. There they open to each other their very hearts. There they study to increase, not to diminish their mutual happiness. There they think all that another enjoys is as if they did enjoy it themselves. And what they have of their own, it is not for themselves alone, but for every body else. There you shall meet with no pale fears, no anxious cares, no fruitless wishes, no tormenting jealousies, and no amorous sighs neither; for every one will love others as much as they desire, and wish for no return again, but only love. If there be any particular friendships there, they do not at all spoil the universal kindness of the place. Others will not be loved the worse for them, but rather loved better; because they will teach those united hearts the greatest love. They may be esteemed also one of the beauteous spectacles of the place, and be reckoned among the grateful varieties which will entertain us; when after the pleasures of a more general and large conversation, every one may retire to the company of those he loveth most.

There you will be met with such great and shining lights as St. Paul, who set all the world on fire with the flames of their

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love. You will fall into the company of those burning hearts who were martyred first by their own love, and then by their persecutor's fury, for the good of the world. And do you think they have put off their affections when they laid aside their rags of flesh? Did all their fire go out, when they suffered a dissolution of their house of earth? Or shall we imagine that this generous passion is the offspring of our body, and owes its being, birth and strength to this corporeal nature? We may not so defame and asperse the love of our Lord, who no doubt hath a more tender heart in the heavens than he had upon the earth. We may expect to find there more love in the breasts of these holy lovers who followed him, than here they were owners of; though they had then so much that it was large enough to embrace the whole world. They have not left their nature, but only its imperfections. They have not changed their affections, but only heightened and improved them. And therefore judge how happy you will be in the acquaintance of such persons, and how much more happy in their excellent friendship. Your love will be raised to a strange pitch when you approach such intense and vastly increased flames. Your heart will be all fire when you come near to such huge furnaces: the heat of whose love in this cold region was so strong, that it would have forced a sensible soul to expire with them. And is the joy, think you, conceivable, which you will feel when you find yourself in the arms of those mighty lovers? For my part I can imagine nothing but an ecstacy, when we shall be placed in such great hearts; which are nothing else but love and joy to see us at Jerusalem. I cannot propound to my desires a pleasure more charming than this, unless it be to join both heart and voice with the whole number of those glorious friends, to chant the praises of our Creator and Redeemer. And indeed it is beyond the measure of my poor skill to invent any words that can tolerably describe the melodies which will then be made, when the glorious company of the apostles, the goodly fellowship of the prophets, the noble army of the martyrs, the glittering troops of confessors, and the innumerable hosts of triumphant souls, shall compose but one quire to sing their anthems and hallelujahs to the God of love. But yet I am apt to think that their music will receive no small part of its graces from hence, that there will be no discord in their

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hearts, nor jarring in their affections, but that love will exactly tune them to a perfect harmony. Nay, this seems to be the sum of what we can say of the happiness of that estate, that it consists in a rapturous love of God, and a most passionate love of one another. And truly this is a thing so inviting, and I have such a particular affection to this unity of spirit among brethren, that I should be tempted here to speak a little of that charity which you ought to have to your neighbour (as I have already instructed you about that you owe to God), but that I have assigned another time and place for that discourse.

CHAP. XIV.

The manner of their life who live at Jerusalem: and that all things concur to make it the most pleasant of all other.

You have great encouragement then to make haste to Jerusalem, for you see they pass their time there more delightfully than in any other place; and lead a life so much to their content, that one may truly say their employment is to please themselves, and to do according to their desires. The most vigorous soul that this earth affords is but a drone in compare with the sprightful air of them that inhabit those celestial regions. You would say the most pleasant days that here we lead, and study to prolong to an hundred years, are but like a sleep and a dream, a mere image and shadow of life; if you could but be raised for one minute to the strength and activity of those happy people, and receive but the slightest taste of those lively and essential delights which force the whole soul to attend unto them. The briskness and cheerfulness of your youthful time doth not so much excel the flat and insipid pleasures of your decrepit age, as they themselves are surpassed by the quickness and height of those joys wherein the citizens of Jerusalem are eternally immersed. It is impossible for me to declare the smallest part of the sweet delectations which they resent; but, to gratify those longings which I discern I have already excited in you, I shall run the adventure of describing a few of those pleasures that gush out of that full and ever-springing fountain of good with whom they live and maintain an happy converse. And because I believe you are de-

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sirous to know how they receive and take in those voluptuous enjoyments, I will endeavour with one labour to satisfy you in both.

You may conceive then, if you please, that such a spirit as your own, being advanced and fortified much beyond the feeble narrowness of this present state, doth continually employ the highest and most sovereign powers that it hath upon the highest and most supreme Good: that it is daily admiring his excellent nature, loving and embracing his amiable perfections, blessing and praising his bounteous disposition, studying to conform itself to all his desires, rejoicing in the full satisfaction which he communicates to its heart, and in one word doing all those actions which a soul is capable to perform upon any other object in this world: and then you will have a little idea of that infinite delectation which such a conjunction of the very top and flower of the mind with the beginning and original of all good must needs produce. Look how you are moved in the enjoyment of any sensual good, and that will tell you what they do who live at Jerusalem, and wherein the pleasure of their life doth consist. You see it, or some way or other perceive it; you apprehend and lay hold of it; you feel it; you cleave unto it; you are tickled and delighted in it: and just so will you and all they live and be happy in God who arrive at that blessed place. Their life and felicity consists in a clear and distinct perception of him; in a close union and conjunction of heart and will with him; in a feeling of the pleasures that are in him; in an ardent embracement of him, that they may more feel him; and in an high delight and ravishment of spirit in such enjoyment of him. Thither if we can but get, we shall love as much as we are able, and be able to love far more than we can now think. The greatness of the object will intend the affection. The vastness of the good will force the will to desire and love more than else it would. We shall enjoy according to the wideness of our capacity; and all our capacities will be so enlarged, that they will exceed the extent of our present thoughts, as much as our present thoughts exceed our present enjoyments. It is a life wherein we shall do nothing but what we desire; and wherein all things shall be just as we will ourselves; and wherein we shall will nothing but that which

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is most to be chosen: a life, every act of which must needs be sweet, and full of joy, beyond all the measures of all our present wishes. When we think, we shall rejoice; when we love, we shall rejoice; when we adore or praise, we shall rejoice. Whatsoever we do, it will have infinite delight and pleasure in it; and when we have done it never so oft, it will be eternally to be done again: and we shall likewise have more power to do it; and every repetition of such acts will be with a fresh addition of contentment in the doing of them. There is no satiety nor loathing in the enjoyment of that good; no fainting nor growing weary: but we shall always think we have enough, and yet still be enjoying more; we shall be in a perpetual youth and vigour, and yet daily growing more strong and able to converse with God. For that great Good cannot be known at once, nor can all the sweetness of that life be instantly tasted, nor the rivers of those pleasures be drunk up at one draught: but fresh delights will continually entertain us; new pleasures will be springing forth unto us, and a flood of joy that we never knew before will overflow us, out of that full fountain who now issues forth in so many streams, and diffuses himself in such great varieties in this world; that our minds may be every moment employed in some rarity of nature, which, till then, did never affect their eyes. A happy life sure this will be, when we shall have before us such an inexhausted ocean of good to fill us, and such great appetites to be filled, and such repeated satisfaction in the filling of them, and such an increase of strength by their satisfaction; and wider capacities also created by the continual flowing in of that good upon us, which will distend and stretch our souls by its enjoyment, to make us more able to enjoy it.

And now need I be at any pains to persuade you that this city is a place which abounds so much with a plenty of all good things, that there can be no want at all, but a perfect fulness of whatsoever may be an happiness to us? It is apparent already that whatsoever we can desire, there it is present, and whatsoever is present is good, and whatsoever good there is, it is all good, pure good, without any evil; and that pure good is all in one good, God himself, who can be nothing else but good. How much doth the good things of this world

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delight us, which yet are not good by themselves, nor contain in them all that good is, nor are only good neither, but come with a great mixture of trouble to us! Will not the enjoyment then of him give us infinitely more pleasure, and make us perfectly happy, who is good by himself, and not by derivation from any other, and so is perfectly good, and nothing else but good without any thing at all to abate his sweetness. These things here below (saith an ancient guide to Jerusalem[d] whom I have met withal) are something good, else how should they at all delight us? but they could not be good at all, if it were not for him that is all good and only good, who hath made them to be what good they are. For all good was created by him, and he is that good which was created by none. He is good by his own good, and not by any participated goodness; he is good from his good self, and not by adhering to any other good. As much therefore as he excels all other good, so much must our enjoyment of him excel all other enjoyment. As he is a good that is from none but himself, so our happiness will be a good that depends on none but his happiness. When we are with him we shall but ask, and we shall see; we shall but see, and we shall love; we shall but love, and we shall eternally rejoice: or rather we need not ask at all, for he will but present himself before us, and force us to love and rejoice without any measure.

And seeing it is a place of such full satisfaction, you will not question its tranquillity and repose, especially since it is (as you heard before you came hither) the very Vision of Peace. The life which they lead there is so full of content, that they are not disturbed by any passion, nor disquieted by the violence and disorder of any unruly affection. A life it is, void of all sadness, free from all grief, quit of all care, and rid of all anxiety of mind: where there is no adversary to assault, no forbidden fruit to tempt, no impetuous desire of the flesh to molest them, and no fear neither that ever they shall be haunted with these enemies of their peace and contentment. O how happy should we find ourselves, if we were but come to the top of that high mountain, which will seem the more clear and quiet,

[d] St. Aug. [vid. Enarr. in Psalm. cxxxiv. 3. tom. iv. col. 1494.]

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because so many clouds have here so often overcast us, and so many sudden blasts have ruffled and discomposed us. There we shall not accuse one another of any injuries, because we shall not do the least; nor be troubled to pursue our right, because we shall not be wronged. There we shall live without jealousies; and converse (as I have told you) without suspicion; and pass eternity without any difference of opinion, or debates and controversies in religion, which now are no small disease, and bring no little burden upon our hearts. Nay, the very actions of piety, many of them, will be of a different kind from what they now are, unattended with those passions to which we are now moved, which make us suffer evil, while we do good. Here, as the forenamed person well observed to me, we do good works, when we deal our bread to the hungry, and receive the distressed stranger, and clothe the naked; which is a kind of affliction and tribulation which we endure by our sympathy with them to whom we pay our charity. For we find miserable persons on whom to exercise our mercy, and the misery which we see they lie under makes us compassionate, that is, to suffer with them. How much better then shall we be, when we shall find no hungry mouth to feed, no stranger to entertain, no naked body to cast our garments over, no sick men to attend, no prisoner to visit, no tormented person to commiserate, no differences to compose, no contenders to reconcile; but our love shall be of another sort, all joy, all pleasure in the good and in the perfect happiness of every one that we behold! And if there were nothing else there to entertain us but the comforts of that friendship I told you of, and the delights we shall interchange by a constant amity and good will to one another; it were sufficient to recommend this life to any wise man's affections, and make him willing to forsake this world, to go to a place of such endless love and kindness.

And doth there now need any demonstration that this is a place of great safety and security, environed on all sides with the power of God against the attempts of all the enemies of our happiness? No sure, for then we should be in danger of some disturbance. If we should conceive indeed any forces could be gathered against it, and that it were not impregnable in itself, we might easily imagine that so many troops of illus-

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trious friends, so many bands of holy lovers as here inhabit, would perform strange things against the most puissant invaders. There is nothing, I told you, so strong as love, by the force of which in one single person, incredible things have been achieved: and therefore much greater would the united power of it appear in so many hosts of noble spirits all inspired with the highest degree of this affection, who would do their utmost for the service and safety of one another. But yet we need not have recourse to such fancies as these, for the assurance of our peace in that blessed place. It is impossible that any thing should wound the quiet of such happy souls, or make the least breach in any of their enjoyments. There cannot be so much interruption given to them as the scratch of a pin among us amounts unto, because they are out of the reach of the evil one, and placed in such still and calm regions, where nothing breathes but only that love and dear affection for ever.

Upon which account also it is, that there can be no intermission of their enjoyments, no more than there will be interruption and disturbance. It being a full and perfect happiness, there will no time pass wherein they will not be happy. The days there have no nights: the life hath no sleep, which is but the 'image of death[a].' There will not be so much diversion there from the proper exercises of that life, as meat and drink now creates, which are the present support of our infirm bodies: much less will there be any disease or decay of strength, or the encumbrance of any of those employments which engage so great a part of our time and thoughts. Our love therefore shall never languish or stand in need of any refreshment; our charity shall not cool and abate its heat; our joy shall not exhaust our spirits, and leave us dull by the excess of it, as here it sometimes doth. But, as I said before, we shall rather gather strength, and grow more apt to receive an increase of joy, by the greatness and force of that which we have already received.

[a] ["Stulte, quid est somnus, gelidæ nisi mortis imago?" Ovid. Amor. ii. 9. 41.

Cf. Plat. Apol. p. 40 D; Xen. Cyrop. viii. 7. 20; Cic. Tusc. i. 41, de Sen. 22; Clem. Alex. Pædag. ii. 9. p. 218.]

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I need but just remember you, it being a thing you have heard no doubt an hundred times, that this life of theirs is without any death: an *eternal life*, (as the holy books call it,) where we shall not have so much sadness as the thoughts of its having an end would beget. But we shall rejoice, first, that we have so much, and next of all, that we shall never have less, and then that we shall still enjoy more; and above all, that what we do enjoy shall live as long as God who is the cause of it, that is, for ever.

I believe you are not weary of so delightful a discourse; yet, lest I should keep you too long from the rest of my instructions, I shall shorten it as much as I can, and shut up this description with a meditation of that devout person, who, as I told you long ago, undertook the guidance of men to Jerusalem. "How different," saith he, "is the life of those in that place from that of ours here! Here there is falsehood; there is truth. Here is perturbation; there is a faithful possession. Here is bitterness and hatred; there is dilection and eternal love. Here is dangerous elation of mind; there is secure exultation of spirit. Here we are in doubt whether they that love us may not change their thoughts; there is perpetual friendship, and no possibility of being enemies. Here whatsoever is good we are afraid may perish; there whatsoever we receive will be preserved by him that gave it. Here there is death; and there is nothing but life. Here we enjoy what the eye and the ear and our thoughts present unto us; but there we shall see what the eye hath not seen, and hear what the ear hath never heard, and understand what the heart cannot now comprehend: and seeing, hearing, and knowing after that manner, we shall rejoice with joy unspeakable. For what kind of joy must that be when thou seest thyself in the company of angels; a partner in the kingdom of heaven, to reign with the King of the world; desiring nothing, to possess all things; rich without covetousness; charitable without money; triumphing, without the fear of any barbarous invaders; and living this life without any death? O sweet life! the more I think of thee the more I love thee; the more vehemently I desire thee, the more I am pleased in the remembrance of thee; I love to speak of thee, I love to hear of thee, I love to write of thee, to

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confer of thee, to read of thee; that so I may refresh the pains and the sweat and the dangers of this tedious life, by laying my weary head in the bosom of thy secure pleasures. For this end I enter into the garden of the holy Scriptures; I gather there the sweet flowers of divine sayings; that which I gather I eat; that which I eat I chew over again; and that which I have tasted I lay up in mine heart; that by such sweetness I may allay the bitterness and irksomeness of this miserable life. O that my sins were done away! O that laying aside the burden of this flesh, I might enter into thy ease and quiet! to receive the crown of life; to be associated to the celestial singers; to behold the face of Christ; to see the uncircumscribed light; and, without fear of death, to rejoice without any end! There is the goodly fellowship of the prophets; there are the glorious twelve apostles; there is an innumerable army of martyrs; there is the holy company of pious confessors; there are the divine lovers of solitude and retirement; there are the holy women, that have overcome the infirmities of their sex and the powers of the world; there are the brave youths and virgins, whose holy manners transcended their years; there are the sheep and the lambs that have escaped the danger of glutting themselves with these earthly pleasures; there perfect charity reigns, because God is there all in all. There they see without fear, and love without measure, and praise without ceasing. There loving they praise, and praising they love; and it is their work to do so always, without any interruption. But alas! who can tell what a great good God is? (as he proceeds in another place;) who can declare how full he is, or relate the happiness that he will give us? We cannot tell it, and yet we cannot hold our peace; it is more than can be uttered, and yet we cannot choose but talk of it. And if we cannot tell it because of our ignorance, and yet cannot hold our tongues because of our joy for what we know, in what condition are we, which will neither let us speak, nor yet be silent? What shall we do with ourselves, if we can neither tell what it is, nor yet cease to speak of it? I'll tell you in two or three words: Let us rejoice; let us praise God; let us keep a perpetual jubilee here in our hearts; thanking him very much that we know so much of his happiness, and thanking him more that it is so great that we cannot know it all."

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Here, if the guide had not made a little stop, I think the pilgrim had interrupted him; for he had kept his silence thus long with great difficulty; and now cried out, with a more than ordinary vehemence, Blessed be God, that he hath brought me to this place! This is none other than the suburbs of Jerusalem; this is the gate of heaven. Happy was the day which let me see your face! I heard something of Jerusalem before by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eyes see it, and I am all enamoured of it. You have shown me a sight so glorious, that it is beyond our thoughts, and beyond our desires; I was going to say, beyond our faith, and beyond our hope. Sure you are one of the angels of God sent from Jerusalem to fetch me thither. You had inflamed me with an high degree of love before; but now you have put me in a fiery chariot, and methinks I am not upon the earth, but ascending up to those heavenly regions. Nay, you have transported me to the city of God already. Methinks I see the Lord of glory. I behold the thrones that are erected for all the noble travellers to that holy land. I fancy myself in the dear embraces of those glorious lovers. And I am apt to embrace you as one of the seraphims, that have fired my soul with the same love. I see the blessed Jesus preparing himself for his appearance; and begin to think that I am triumphing with him. Or, if I am but in a dream of these things, yet it is so pleasant, that I could wish it might last for ever, and that nothing might awake me out of such a delightful slumber. Not so, said his guide (interrupting his speech), I love you better than to let you enjoy such a wish; and I would rouse you up to demonstrate their reality, if I thought you took these things for charming dreams and painted shadows. You shall not make such a mean supposal, nor content yourself with such airy pleasures; for I will make you know at once both that there is such a blessed place as I have described, and discover to you more perfectly the way unto it. There is another dear name inclosed in those words which I told you must always be sealed upon your heart, and that is the holy JESUS. On whom I do not intend that you should look only as he sits on his throne of glory at Jerusalem, but as he walked up and down the world, and was a pilgrim like yourself travelling to that place. He published the glory of it; he *brought life and immortality to light;* he

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set open the gates of Jerusalem to all faithful travellers; he run the race himself wherein you are to follow; and, *for the joy that was set before him* when he should come thither, he was not ashamed of a poorer habit than the meanest pilgrim wears. If you take a view therefore of his life, and trace his holy steps, you cannot miss the road which I would have you take, nor fail to be convinced that it can carry you to no other place but the city of God. For, do you not remember that this person hath styled himself *the Way?* There is nothing so necessary then in all that sentence as this one word JESUS to have always in your mind: whom I shall now describe unto you as a fair copy, not only of that humility and charity which I named before, but of all other things that you must resolve to undertake if you mean to come at Jerusalem.

CHAP. XV.

A description of Jesus, who is the true way to Jerusalem: in which he is propounded to the pilgrim's imitation.

I. AND first I must set this Jesus before your eyes as one that was dead to these outward things while he lived among them, and that withdrew his heart from the world while he conversed with it. He was not a person cloistered and retired from the society of men. He led not an anchoret's life, which obliged him to shun their company: nor did he put on a sullen gravity, that should affright men from his fellowship; but he used the greatest freedom, and treated men with such familiarity that he invited them into it. He did eat and drink as other men do: he refused not their invitation when they were desirous to entertain him; and even at a marriage he denied not to be a guest when his presence was welcome to them. He had opportunities of enriching himself as well as other men. Honours would have waited upon him, if he had pleased, without a miracle. It depended upon himself alone to become the greatest man in the world: and the pleasures which others seek would have pursued him, if he had but given them encouragement. Herein he made himself glorious, and hath left us a noble example, that he was mortified to all these carnal delights, when they were ready to thrust themselves upon him; that he denied the desires of wealth, when it would cost

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him no more pains than to receive it; and that he refused all the kingdoms of the world, which would have easily disposed themselves to his obedience. He walked into cities and towns, and was still as unsupported from the world as he was in a wilderness. He lived in the thickest of its temptations, but none of them could fasten or stick upon him. He had power at will, and his will set bounds to it when it had none of its own. He was a sovereign Lord, but made no advantage thereby, save only to be better and to do more good than any of his subjects. He used greater moderation in all enjoyments than those did on whom he bestowed them. He lived in a sense of the spiritual world, while he was a man of this, and encompassed about with our infirmities. He was a stranger to all the evil manners and customs of men, while he was familiar with themselves; and he testified against their wicked deeds, while he kept them company: nay, he purified many by his example, remaining uncorrupted by any of theirs. And truly such a life it is that you are to lead. Your way to Jerusalem lies through the world. You must not think to step into none but religious houses, or to fall into no company but that of the pious: much less must you expect to lie immured from the spectacles of vanity, and to secure yourself from temptations within the enclosure of high walls, which they cannot climb over to approach you. But your manner of life will lead you through the crowd: your way will bring you into open fields, and expose you oftentimes to the throng of sensual objects; against which you will have no defence but your own valorous resolution. You will not be able to refuse them your company, or to pass along without their acquaintance. It will not be at your choice whether you will see, and hear, and feel those things that are amiable and delightful: nor can you stop your ears so close, but you will perceive they invite you to a friendship with them. Your skill and your courage therefore consists in this; that in imitation of your Master Jesus, you live and converse with all these things as a man that is dead. You must keep them company in such a sort, that they may find it is but the shadow of you that is among them, and that they do not possess yourself. Let them know that they may as well invite a ghost to their intemperance, uncleanness, and greediness of the world, as waste their time in soliciting of your affection. Make them feel that is but half of you, and the worser half,

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which walks among them; and that it is impossible they should have the better part. Let men have your company, but be not partaker with them in their sins. Follow your affairs like other folk, but take heed and beware of covetousness; and watch that you be not overtaken with surfeiting and drunkenness, or the cares of this life. Let the world understand that you can see it every day, and not fall in love with it: that you can deal and traffic with it, if need be, and yet not be unrighteous: that you can behold all its honours, and not be ambitious: that you need not hide your eyes from its beauties, and yet remain your own, and live in purity of heart. Beware of pleasing and humouring any of your senses. Suffer them not to feed too greedily upon any object, lest your soul be enchanted and cast into a forgetfulness of Jerusalem. And remember always, that you are to use all these earthly things rather of necessity than of choice, and to afford them your company, but not your friendship.

And this, let me tell you, is a more excellent and useful life, I may add, more laborious too, than any other; though the austerities of monks and hermits seem so grievous and horribly affrighting. Notwithstanding all the sharpness they enjoin themselves, they reap a great deal of ease who are sequestered from public offices, and live without the encumbrance of many affairs. Though their rules, to which they are tied, appear so rigorous, yet they are neither so many in number, nor so thorny in their nature, nor have so many faces as those which bind a man of exact integrity in civil life. They have but a few things to employ them, and he is engaged in a multitude; and they have the same things to do over again, but his rules vary with a thousand circumstances. It is a pleasure to avoid the pains of well doing among those that are evil. It is a repose to have but few enemies, and those such as have been beaten an hundred times. These people may have some other glory, but that of overcoming difficulties, methinks, belongs not to them. Moderation is a virtue much more toilsome than their sufferance: that hath a thousand several fashions, whereas this hath no more than one. It is no wonder that a man should be good where he sees nothing that is bad. He may well keep his innocence where it is hard to lose it; and

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soon secure his soul when there is nothing offers to rob him of it. He is a very unfortunate man (as I have heard somebody well express it) who drowns himself in that place where he can scarce find water enough to quench his thirst. His hap is exceeding hard who shall take a surfeit where there is scarce so much victuals as will break one's fast. But when we are thronged with temptations, and beset with enemies; when there is a battery planted against every gate, and not one of our senses is free from assault; then it is a business of some labour, and it deserves praise, to secure our souls, and to defend them bravely in such a violent storm. To escape drowning when we are upon the sea, when the winds are boisterous, the channel dangerous, and we are cast among rocks, and have shelves and quicksands very near us on the right hand and on the left, is a business that calls for an excellent skill, and a very even steerage, and such an experience as cannot be learned without a great deal of pains and diligence. Then Piety will thank us for our love when we are courted by Vice: and we shall seem to have done some honour to Goodness by cleaving to her when we had large offers to become bad. So that I cannot see by what merit the secluse do assume to themselves the title of *religious* more than others, seeing they give a greater proof of their virtue who are in the world, and the world is not in them, than those in whom indeed the world is not, but they also are not in the world. It is more glorious to beat an enemy than to fly away from him; and it requires a greater spirit to maintain a breach than to hold out within the walls.

Not that I discommend solitude at your first setting out, or would have you neglect it at certain seasons through your whole journey, (for you shall know the use of it better hereafter,) but it is not fit to design to live always in secret if it be possible to live and be safe in the world. This, I would have you think, is the more perfect life, and more like to our Saviour's; and therefore aspire to it, and stay not in the other any longer than only to fit and prepare yourself for this. And tell me, I beseech you, do you not think it possible for a man to have his heart in the world when his legs and arms are out of it? May it not dwell in his fancy when he sees it not with

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his eyes? May he not please himself in the shadow and image of his old friend, which, he says, is dead and buried? May not one leave his soul behind when he withdraws his body from all the world? I wish there be not many of such religious men and women: as, on the contrary, I hope there are not a few whose minds and hearts are shut up from the world, though they are with it every day: who have made a cloister for their souls, while their bodies are at liberty: who bridle their appetites, and lay restraints on their desires; though they live at large, and are under no vow but that of their baptism.

Consider therefore how ridiculous it is to imitate another sort of men, who, hearing us speak of forsaking the world, and renouncing all its pomps and vanities, imagine that they should throw away their rich garments, forbear the civility of a compliment, or so much as a salutation, let their gardens become wildernesses, and their pictures make fires, with abundance of such like follies. Alas! what have these poor things done that we should revenge ourselves upon them? What is their guilt, that we should be so severe and fierce against them? Is this the mortification the Scripture speaks of, to execute our anger upon insensible things? It would seem more reasonable if, when a man reads of *crucifying the flesh*, he should go and pierce his own body, and strike nails through his hands and his feet. And yet what blame doth it lie under, that we should put it to that torment? or what is that which we kill by such cruelty? No, no, we must turn the blow another way. We must cut off our affections from these worldly enjoyments: we must walk in the flesh, but not after it: we may feel its desires, but not follow them: we must labour to become poor in the midst of abundance; to be humble in high places; to be temperate amongst the baits of pleasure; to use those things well which custom hath abused; to think of ourselves in fine clothes just as we did before they came on our backs. And, in a few words, to withdraw ourselves from all the inveiglements of the world, not in the common way of removing our persons from it, but by removing it from our esteem and affections.

But I am afraid of running into that error which I purposed to avoid, if I should continue to give such a large and punctual

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account of all that the good man said in this argument. And therefore I will keep more exactly to my method in what ensues, and contract the rest of his discourses concerning Jesus.

II. You must look upon Jesus, (proceeded he,) in the next place, as a person that was highly contented, and very liberal in the midst of the greatest poverty. It would have been little less than a wonder (as the world now goes) if I had said that he thought he had enough, though all the ground he trod upon had been his own; and that he was bountiful, though he had been able to pave his way with silver and gold. But he hath left us a higher pattern, and taught us, even in our poverty, to be charitable to those who are reduced to greater necessities; and in the meanest condition to be better pleased than worldly men are in the greatest superfluities and abundance. He had no lands nor yearly revenues, and yet the hospitality was noble which he maintained. His incomes were uncertain, and yet he never complained or troubled his mind because his estate was no better assured. His disciples were men of a small fortune, and yet he labours to infuse into them a most liberal disposition. He stuck not to spend all the victuals he had upon the hungry multitude. He chose to lay out the whole provision of his numerous family in one feast, rather than suffer them to faint who were come to hear his word. Though he lived as a beggar himself, yet he kept a purse for the poor. Though he was supported by the charity of others, yet he would be no more than their steward, and received their alms to give it away. Great persons ministered to him, but he himself was the minister of all. His poverty might have enriched himself, but he chose by it to enrich others. And this truly seems to have been the proper effect of his being dead to the world. He felt no need of its riches, and so he did not covet them. And he did not let them into his heart when they came to him, and so he was not unwilling to part with them. He thought the goodness of all these things consisted in their use; and he knew no better employment for them than to send them to serve those who were pressed with want. You cannot therefore better please him than by imitating this bounteous disposition. There will nothing more endear you to him than such a generosity, which may show itself in a mean as well as

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in a plentiful fortune. Do you not observe what praises he bestows upon a poor widow who had cast all her living into the public stock? It seems to me that it was a more pleasing spectacle to him than all the offerings of the rich. Read but his famous sermon which he made to his followers, and there you will find so many precepts of taking no care for meat, and drink, and clothes, and of giving away hoping for nothing again; that you will think he had a mind to recommend to them this contentedness and charity above all things else. And, lest you should fancy that all the acts of his charity were miracles, which are no examples to us; or be like the hypocrites, who imagine his precepts were given to upbraid our weakness, and reproach to us our fall rather than to direct our practice; observe the smart question which he asks toward the conclusion of that sermon, *Why call you me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say*[a]*?* As if he should have said, Are you not ashamed to call me your Master, and yet do nothing that I command? What mischief is this, that you should acknowledge mine authority, and yet not be governed by my will? Away with this hypocrisy; call me Lord no more, when you will neither do as I say, nor as I do. The very same words should I now say to you if I did not think that you were resolved to tread in his steps; and that you esteemed poverty with contentment the greatest riches, and a liberal heart with a small estate the largest possessions. You will not fail, I know, to scatter your charity as you go along to Jerusalem. If you meet with any distressed person in your way, you will be sure to do like the good Samaritan, and provide for his health and deliverance. Nay, spare not to seek for opportunities to do good; and since we live in an ill-natured and hard-hearted age, let your light so shine before men, that they may see Jesus still in the world. And indeed I have often beheld, to my great astonishment, a poor pilgrim give more largely to a charitable use than a person of high condition in the world. There are many rich gluttons who will bestow more upon their dogs than upon a needy Lazarus. I have heard men wonder they are not ashamed to see themselves outdone by people of a meaner rank; and that they do not fear the bowels of the poor will groan against them, and com-

[a] Luke vi. 46.

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plain to Heaven of their unmercifulness: but so it is, that they have hardened their own bowels toward them, and think that Heaven is as insensible of all their cries as themselves. Their hearts are as cold as stones; and you may as soon move a statue to do good as one of these images of men. They are not crucified to the world, but they are killed in her embraces, and she hath hugged them to death in her arms. The world hath poured too many of her favours upon them, and pressed them to death with the weight of silver and gold. Their hands are fast closed, their fingers are stiff and rigid: they hold their money so hard, that a dead man's hand cannot be more inflexible, nor hold that thing harder which he grasps when he is just expiring. Nothing but the example of the Lord of life will be of any power to get them open. There is none but himself can breathe such a spirit into them as will loosen the cold bands of death, and make them stretch forth themselves to the relief of their perishing neighbours. Propound therefore this pattern everywhere in your practice; and if men like not to be the followers of Christ on these terms, tell them they must look for their wages at the devil's hands. He hath as fast hold of those misers' souls as they have of their money. Hell is as greedy as their desires: it gapes for them as they do insatiably for riches. And besides, if there be any truth in our sacred books, they, and their riches, and their posterity shall rot and become as vile as those whose miseries they will not pity.

III. And when you have well affected your heart with this heavenly-minded and compassionate Jesus, then turn your eyes to another sight, and behold in him the deepest humility, and the most profound lowliness of mind, joined with the greatest perfections and highest abilities that ever any man had. If there were ever any man in the world that had cause to bear himself high, this was the person. His endowments were divine; his reasons were inspirations; his words were oracles; and yet blocks and trunks are wont now to lift up themselves higher in their own conceit than he could be tempted to do. Never had any one so large a knowledge, that boasted so little of it. His power was not to be equalled on earth, and yet it did not domineer over the meanest creature. He could do what he would

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with a word; but would not employ the least breath in his own praises. The very hem of his garment was thought to be of a miraculous virtue, but it was touched with pride as much as himself. The wonders which he did were always accompanied with another wonder, that he took not the honour of them, but gave it to God. He was dead indeed not only to the outward world, but also to himself. He was not only insensible of the blandishments of fleshly pleasures, but of the flatteries of spiritual pride. He wrought such miracles as to raise the dead, but they could never raise any self-conceit, nor give vain-glory in him any life. He would have concealed his works, if God's glory had not been concerned in them more than his own. He would have stopped the people's mouth as well as his own breath, and stifled fame as much as others seek to give it air, if it had not been for the good of the world that he should be known. And therefore when the fame of him did fly abroad, it could carry no other news but that he was as humble as he was great. When he was so high in the people's esteem, that they would have advanced him to be a king, he chose rather to remain a private man. When they would have carried him into a palace, and made him a court, he liked better to steal away into a desert. Poor men were his companions; fishermen and the meaner sort he took for his attendants. When he was in his greatest triumph, he was meek and lowly, riding upon an ass. When his ears were filled with hosannas, he was going to humble himself to the shameful death of the cross. He was in truth no other than the King of courtesy and humility; a Prince that listened to the petitions of the poorest supplicants; that stood still to hear the cries of blind beggars; that would not refuse a work of charity because of its vileness; and in one word, that stooped so low us to wash his disciples' feet, which was the meanest office of a servant. I need not tell you sure for what purpose he did this, seeing he himself hath saved me the labour by that speech of his to those whom he had so washed, *I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you*[k]. Let me say to you therefore as he doth presently after to those persons, *If you know these things, happy are you if you do them*[l]. You must lay yourself as low as the dust you tread upon in the way to Jerusalem.

[k] John xiii. 15. [l] Ver. 17.

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You must not study fame so much as virtue. You must acknowledge God in all, and magnify yourself in nothing. You must raise a name to him, and not seek your own renown. When you are praised, you must be the same that you are when men discommend you. You must think it dangerous to aspire to honours, and hunt after promotions. Let them find you as unwilling to receive them as others are to forbear their courtship towards them. Condescend to men of low estate, and sort yourself familiarly with those who are below you. Let the poor never be the object of your scorn; but think that pride doth render you poorer and more despicable than them. Remember to stoop to the meanest offices of love, whereby you may serve your brethren; and when you have done them, think that they are to be done again when their needs require them. And, that I may not seem to impose any heavy burden upon you, do but look at Jerusalem, and see how Jesus is advanced by humbling himself; and you will not need any exhortation to this virtue which before I so much praised, and now again commend to your affection. Many of the angels, they say, made it their study to raise themselves higher than they were, but miscarried in the enterprise, and were not able to effect it. They tried their wings, and began to soar aloft, but they failed them sadly, and let them suffer a shameful fall. But Jesus, on the contrary, studied to be a great deal lower than he was; not only lower than the angels, but inferior to men, even the vilest of men. The issue of which was, that you see him exalted at God's right hand; and he hath raised himself thereby, not only to the places from whence those angels fell, but to such a dignity that he is higher than all principalities and powers, and hath the noblest creatures put in subjection under his feet. Be a follower of Jesus therefore in his humility, depressing yourself as low as you can in your own thoughts; for that is the way to raise yourself to the highest pitch of glory, and to be made equal to the angels of God, who have kept their station, and always had their dwelling at Jerusalem. And it may not be amiss the more effectually to excite you, if you consider how those noble persons have preserved their first habitation, and remained so long in the celestial court. Was it not by humbling themselves to the meanest employments, to which the Sovereign of all orders and ranks of being in the

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world was pleased to assign them? Are they not content to come and wait upon the poorest of us, and to serve as a guard to the most abject of the sons of men? Let us not refuse then to submit to any condition of life wherein our wise Governor thinks good to place us, nor imagine any office below us, in which we may be useful and serviceable to our neighbours. If we had no greater example than the angels, it might well be expected that we should not disdain to appear in the meanest dress; but since the Lord of them all is pleased to become our pattern, and to abase himself far lower than they, it should make us love to be all over covered with this humility, and to esteem it the most glorious robe that we can wear. And truly, if our hearts were touched with such a charity to others as he was endued withal, we should not stick to bow ourselves, though we were never so high, to the vilest services, for the succour and help of those whose miseries implored our assistance.

IV. Let me propose to you therefore the blessed Jesus, in the next place, as a person that was very full of love, tenderness, and bowels of compassion towards those that deserved nothing; nay, towards those that deserved ill at his hands. He was so disposed to do good, that they could not miss of his kindness, who neither desired it, nor were willing when it was offered to receive it. He did not only pity the weakness and infirmity of his disciples, but had a feeling of the sufferings of those who were strangers: neither was he only kind and benign towards supplicants, but his heart was tender to the perverse, untoward, and ungrateful people. There was nothing of roughness, sourness, and uncivility in his manners, but they were smooth, sweet, and full of courtesy. His heart was not at all pinched and narrowed by the love of himself; but it was enlarged into such an universal charity, that he seemed to forget his own concerns, the better to provide for the good of others. The instances of his benignity and good nature are so many, that to reckon them all would be as long as to tell a story of his whole life; for *he went about doing good.* It was his work and employment to do benefits to the world. He was the Sun of Righteousness, that run a long race for no other prize, but only to have the honour of spending his beams. He

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rejoiced to spread his healing wings over every place. It was his pleasure to shed his influences, and to make all that saw him sensible of his flames. The patients that solicited his healing power were innumerable, and the cures which he wrought were not fewer than they. He lived all his time in a kind of hospital, being thronged with sick men, with Lazarus, and other diseased folks. And though it were turned sometimes to a bedlam, by the company of demoniacs and phrenetical people; yet he never complained of the burden, but cheerfully entertained the occasion of putting them in possession of their wits again. Never did he send any man away without satisfaction to his desires; but he cast out devils, cleansed their leprosies, cured their palsies, untied the tongue of the dumb, opened the eyes of the blind, restored feet to the lame; and besides, relieved their necessities, had compassion on their hunger, and fed their bodies and their souls both together. The whole country seemed to be his family, and if he had been the father of them all, he could not have been more tender, or yearned with greater bowels of mercy towards them. The opposition and contradiction of brutish men did not alter the sweetness of his disposition towards them: but he continued to do them good, to beseech and entreat them, to weep over them, and sigh for their infidelity. And when it grew to such an height that they sought to kill him who had saved the lives of so many, yet so great was his charity, that he passed by their offences, sought not for revenge, which it was easy for him to find; and, to speak all in one word, forgave the most ungrateful enemies that ever were. I believe you will easily grant, that it is a matter of less difficulty to forgive the injuries we receive from one that never was obliged to us, than to pardon him to whom we have expressed the greatest kindness, and used with the highest civility, especially if his malice arise so high as to seek our life. And yet so loving was our Lord, and so desirous to set us a noble example, that he never expressed greater charity than when he had the greatest reason to be incensed. He freely remitted the wrongs of those who not only hated him without a cause, but who had great cause to love him above all the world. And though the wrongs were as great as the benefits he had bestowed, and they were beyond all measure; yet, as his benefits did not make them

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become his friends, so their wrongs could not make him become their enemy. What greater malignity is there than that which moves men to bereave others of their life? and what greater charity than that which endeavours to preserve it? We can conceive of none higher, unless it be this, to sacrifice our own life for the preserving of other men's, especially of theirs that take it away. And such was the love of our Lord, who was so great a friend to so great enemies as sought for that which he was ready to offer for them. You know very well his words upon the cross, when he made intercession for the transgressors, saying, *Father, forgive them.* Could he more effectually at that time testify his kindness than by such an indulgence in the midst of that cruelty toward him? What do we expect more from a parent, than that he should overlook the faults of his children when they repent and submit themselves to him? And yet our Lord uses these men with greater clemency, and gives them his pardon whilst they were committing of the fault. Nay, he not only forgave them himself, but desires God to grant them remission too, that he might be the only sufferer, and they be free from punishment.

You see then how your way lies, if you will travel to Jerusalem and desire to be with Jesus. The roughness of your way, and the asperities of men's manners, must not spoil the smoothness of your soul, nor exasperate your spirit; but you must be loving and kind to all, even to the greatest offenders. Nay, if your nature be crabbed and austere, you must look so steadfastly upon Jesus, and steep your thoughts so long there, till he infuse himself into you, and change the harshness of your disposition into a sweeter humour. The way to Jerusalem, I assure you, is full of sad spectacles, which will afford you no other pleasure but that of having a tender sense of their miseries, and doing of them good. You must be civil and affable to every one you meet upon the road. You must pity and succour those who are ready to perish. You must counsel and advise the ignorant, and those who are out of the way. You must bless those that throw a curse at you as you go along. You must pray for those that do you wrong. And if any fellow-traveller to whom you have afforded your help should prove a robber, and make an assault upon you, you

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must still preserve your love to him, and not suffer him to rifle you of your grace to forgive him. And indeed, when we consider how much more reason there is that we should do good to others than that God should do good to us; and when we think also how much more he hath done for us than we can do for others; and when we remember withal that they are our equals in the chiefest things, and that in some they may be our superiors, whenas he is so much above us in all; it will set our hearts wide open, and make them free and generous, though they were never so fast locked and barred before; and render them soft and tender, though they were as hard and stubborn as bolts of iron. We shall not then be backward to forgive injuries, to do good to enemies, to repay wrongs with courtesies, to bear with men's folly and weakness, to envy no man's prosperity, but to rejoice in the good of all, as if it were our own happiness. But poor pilgrims will find themselves in such need of the charitable help and comfort of others, that I think it is not necessary to press you any further to this thing, which will be nothing more than *to do to all as you would that all should do to you.*

V. Let me therefore proceed to tell you how Jesus bore the contumelies, reproaches, and slanders of others with the greatest meekness, though he was a person of the greatest quality, and of the highest dignity and worth. No man ever did things with a better grace, or deserved more to be accepted with admiration and praise; and yet there never was any person entertained with greater scorn, or suffered more obloquies and ignominious usage from the world. But did he receive them with that choler and wrath, which they who call themselves high spirits do suffer their souls to be transported withal? No such matter; but *he was dumb as a lamb before the shearers, and did not* so much as *open his mouth;* though, considering his high birth, and the manner of other men, he was tempted to roar like a lion, and speak with a voice of thunder against his insolent despisers. I will not recite all the vilifying language, nor give you a catalogue of the contemptuous actions which he was affronted with; but leave it to your own diligence to observe them, and together therewith the mildness of his spirit, and the admirable temper and moderation of his

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mind in the sharpest provocations to anger and displeasure. When they called him devil, he confuted the calumny by not suffering the least spark of that hellish fire to kindle. When they said he was an impostor, and came to deceive the world, he was only excited thereby more boldly to speak the truth. And when they charged him with treason, he asserted his innocency by no other means than subjection of himself to the vilest death. When they scourged him on the back, and buffeted his face, he did not so much as return them a lash or a blow with his tongue. When they committed all the outrages that could be devised upon him, they only served to prove how free he was from passion and rage. Which methinks should be sufficient to cool the boiling heats of the fiercest spirits, and to quench the intemperate fires that burn in the most enraged minds. There is no man that can boast of such an extraction as his, or that can endure such indignities; and therefore it is insufferable that men's passion and anger should take countenance from the quality of their persons, or the quality of the reproaches that are offered to them. No; the noblest men in the world ought to extinguish these flames by such a glorious example, and to put up offences and scorns quietly without answering and returning the like again. And I beseech you to learn this lesson well if ever you mean to arrive at Jerusalem. You will have very great use of it, and will find it impossible to hold on in your journey, unless you be fortified with this meekness of spirit, and can be content to be despised and set at nought, to be esteemed a fool, an idiot, or any thing else that men please to call you, while you are about God's business and doing his will among them. The very way to Jerusalem is loaded with many reproaches, and therefore they who are in it must not expect to have a privilege of sustaining none of them. A man cannot take a pilgrimage through such a world as this, and meet with no affront and unworthy usage in his passage. Your very habit and fashion, I mean your manners and course of life, are so different from theirs, that they will not love you, though in all things else you please them well enough. A mortified life is a reproach to those who are dissolute. And if they cannot find in their heart to discommend Jerusalem, it is a grievous rebuke to them that they do not travel with you thither. You disturb

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them so much, that you must either have their company or their calumnies. They must either do well, or speak ill of your doings[c]. They are exasperated hereby to slander you, that they may justify themselves; and to follow you with backbiting language, to excuse the not following of your pious life.

It is the part now of a gallant spirit to despise their revilings as much as they despise you. You cannot express greater magnanimity than to neglect these little barkings, and not so much as lift up your staff against those that pursue you with them. Let them know that they are below your anger, and that your resolution is not to be moved by their petulant speeches. As you think that temples and king's palaces are not dishonoured when the dogs that come by do lift up their legs against them[d], so you must not think yourself the worse for the disrespects, the aspersions, and contemptuous language that you meet withal in the world; but be as little concerned in them as you are in the rudeness of those impudent creatures. Let them have not so much power over you as to make your tongues stir, unless it be to bless them: impose a perfect silence on yourself, except it be to speak to God, and not to answer them. But of this ill treatment which you must expect, and your meek endurance of it, I shall have further occasion to admonish you some other time.

VI. Let me now lead you to take a short glance of his admirable patience under unheard-of sufferings, though he was a person no less sensible of pain than he was innocent, and deserved to be freed from it. For which I shall refer you to the history of his bloody and cruel death, where you will behold an heart so resigned to God, that the greatest torments could not make it recoil back into self, nor seek for ease in any other place than in union with his will. All that I shall say in this argument is, that you must learn thereby to endure all things with a constant submission to the divine pleasure and appointment, without those murmurings and complaints which are apt to accompany the crossing of our desire. For we have a great

[c] ['your ill-doings,' ed. 6. 1687.] [d] Julian. [Orat. vi. tom. i. p. 182 B.]

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deal more reason to do so than he, inasmuch as though we may be innocent toward men, yet we are not so toward God; and if our offences were punished according to our desert, they would receive a sharper chastisement than that which we endure. He suffered for well doing, and we for ill; he bore other men's faults, and we our own; he endured much, and we little: and therefore it will be a great shame, if, when our sufferings are little, our repinings are great; and when we suffer what we deserve, it makes us so restless and impatient, that we add to our ill deservings. I pray you therefore to fortify yourself with a great stock of this virtue of patience; for I must tell you ere long a number of things that will try its mettle, and show you in what great need you will stand of it in your way to Jerusalem.

VII. For the present I will divert your thoughts from these sad spectacles, and carry you to more pleasant contemplations. Behold then how Jesus was much with God by meditation, prayer, and devout affection, in the midst of all his business, and in a great crowd of followers and attendants. He lived, as I said, in the world; but in that he sought for solitary places, and abstracted thoughts. When he was with the people, he never forgat God: upon all occasions he took notice of him, and in whatsoever he did acknowledged him. But besides, he devised many times of retirement, and was wont, upon a remove, to send his disciples away before, that he might stay along with him. Nay, so desirous he was of his heavenly solitude, that sometimes he continued a whole night together in prayer and holy thoughts. And so truly would I have you do in your travels: take the advantage of any shades or groves that you shall meet withal, for secret conference and discourse between God and your soul. Repose yourself as long as you can in those cool and still places, and there invite heaven into your society, and prepare yourself for the present it will make you of the best of its blessings. Nay, I would have you form yourself such occasions as oft as you are able, and contrive opportunities for privacy and enclosed thoughts. Build a great many little arbours with your own hands, into which you may withdraw yourself and be alone. Get out of the throng, and make all affairs give way to the entertainment that God will

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give your soul in his blessed company. Bid them stand aside a while, and not presume to disturb the business which you have above. Let every thing understand that you are entered into an holy place, whither they must not dare to approach. And when you are thus sequestered, let me tell you this for your comfort, that you will have the fairest prospect before your eyes that is to be found on this side Jerusalem. You will see the glory of God that shines in all the world; you will hear the music which all his creatures make in his praise; you will be ravished with the taste of his goodness, which you will feel him pouring out on every side; and in one word, you will behold so much of the beauty of Jerusalem itself, that you will travel with the better courage thither. But that in which I would have you spend the greatest part of those private seasons, is in thinking of your own estate, and comparing your life with the life of Jesus. Let him be your companion when you are alone: look steadfastly on his face, and observe what resemblance you bear to him. Pray him to draw and describe himself more exactly upon your soul, and to supply all the lines that are still wanting to render you an accomplished image of him. Show him how desirous you are to be conformed in all your thoughts, words, desires and actions to that excellent model of perfection which he hath given you in his own example. Let him know how much you are in love with him, and that you wish for this above all the world, to be like to him. It cannot be thought that he will deny your desires, or let your endeavours want his help for the making you more complete in him. You will come out of these secret places with a great lustre, and issue forth with a greater force and power to follow the steps of your Saviour. Your face will be endued with such a brightness, and cast such a splendour round about, that it will be seen by all that you have been with Jesus. Who can express the pleasures that hide themselves in these retreats, or tell the contentments that are locked up in those unfrequented closets? Do but enter into the first of them that presents itself, and there will need nothing more than the sensible delectation which you will find in it, to invite you to seek such silent retirements. These quiet places are the resemblances of the serene regions above, and little models of heaven. They are hung round about also with a great many pictures of Jesus,

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which will ravish your heart, and draw it out of your body to snatch it up to himself. In one corner you will see him pictured as the lover of men; and in another you will behold him in the greatest abasement and humility that ever was. On this side you will see him dealing his charity to the poor, and on that he will discover himself attending on the sick. Here his meekness, there his patience will be lively represented to your eyes. In one place you will find him pouring out his instructions, and in another pouring out his blood for the good of men. And from every one of these you will receive such touches, and feel your heart so wounded, that you will never be more enamoured of him, than when you and he thus meet alone, and he makes this private visit to your soul. There he will open his very heart to you, and let you see how much you are in his favour. There he will impart to you his consolations, and fill you with his Spirit. Your mind will there be illuminated, your affections inflamed, your resolutions strengthened, and all your faculties invigorated with a greater cheerfulness in obedience to his will. And therefore do not fail, as oft as you can, to get out of the dust and heat of this world into these close and cool walks which Jesus frequents. For though the dews of the divine grace fall every where, yet they lie longest in the shade. These sugared drops do not love most to stay in the solitary places. And when you can find no where else this milk of heaven wherewith all things are nourished and refreshed, you will be sure to meet with plenty of it in these hidden recesses.

VIII. But then I must remember you, that in the greatest, most open and full manifestations of the glory of God upon Jesus, he was very private too, and cared not for having it published and talked of abroad in the world. When he was transfigured in the holy mount, you read that he went aside *privately* with a few of his disciples, which may well commend unto you the love of retirement: and that brightness also wherewith he was clothed, he commanded to be concealed as a great secret till a fit season to divulge it; which may well teach us to keep to ourselves what passes between God and our souls, till others may be concerned in it as much as ourselves. You may refer this perhaps to the humility of his spirit; but yet I thought

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good to advise you of it alone, because it deserves a particular consideration. There is a vanity you may be guilty of if you heed not this, of glorying when you come abroad again of the secret communication that you have had with Jesus in the time of your solitude. For I observe it is the genius of some who profess acquaintance with him, when they feel any delicious joys exceeding the common sort, (which perhaps are indulged only in favour of their weakness, and intended merely to cherish their present childish condition,) to blaze them every where, and report them to others without any great occasion for it. They think it a piece of religion to communicate their experiences to the next passenger they meet withal: they love that others should know how nobly they are treated; and so they lay a double snare, one for themselves by the high conceit which they may raise in others of their excellencies, and a second for their neighbours by the discouragement they may feel for want of such elevations. If your spirit therefore be at any time transported; if God shine into your heart very brightly, and darken all this world in your eyes by causing his glory to cover you, I beseech you cast a cloud about it, that nobody else may see it, unless the good of others make it necessary that it should be revealed. Draw a veil over your face when it is so radiant, lest by shining too brightly upon others it hurt their eyes, and the reflection of it prove dangerous to yourself. As when you are in the world, you must not forget to be private with God, so when you have been the most with God, it is safest to keep it private from the world.

IX. It may be seasonable here to add, that while he maintained this delightful converse with God for his own benefit, his life was most profitable to others. Prayer and meditation did not hinder his labours, but they were spurs to industry, and made him more careful to do his work for which he was sent into the world. He was not only attent to his own spirit, that it might be kept with God, but he watched for advantages of bringing the hearts of others to him: much less did he spend his time in pleasing amusements to think how much he was in the favour of Heaven; but he issued out of these delicious thoughts, and took as great a pleasure in introducing others into the same favour. There was no hour passed but he did

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some good or other to the world. The finishing of one undertaking was but the passage to another. When he ceased to do any thing, it was only that it might begin again. The change of his labours served him instead of a repose; and to do a new work was all the rest that he desired. His greatest pleasure was to do a pleasure to other men. He chose rather to want his meat than suffer them to want his help. The greater pain there was in any business, the more he delighted in it; and pleasure could not win his love but by means of the labour which did bring it forth. In which diligence it concerns you very highly to imitate him, if you mean to assure your arrival at Jerusalem. The world is then to be feared when it finds us empty and void of employment. We are safe enough though we live in it, if we do not live in idleness. While we have something else to do we shall easily resist it, and turn aside the strongest of its temptations. You must not be at leisure to go about any thing that is bad. You must deprive vice of all means to approach you, and let it have no time wherein to make its assaults. Whensoever it attempts to enter, let it find that you are full, and that there is no room at all for its entertainment. Let the solicitations of the flesh ever come out of season, and know that you have not a moment but what is preengaged to some other employment. When any temptation desires to speak with you, let the answer be ready, that there is other company within, and that you cannot attend it; and when it would violently draw you away, let it find you bound and held very fast by something else. Finally, be unwearied in well-doing, and allot every portion of your time to some honest use or other: so will the world despair of winning you to her desires, when it always takes you otherwise busied, and perceives that all your hours are destined to other purposes. And truly if this were the constant end of our living, to do good or to receive it, it would prove the bane of so many unprofitable thoughts when we are alone, and so many unprofitable words when we are with others, that we and the world would be very much amended by it.

X. But now it is time to draw to an end of this discourse; and therefore I will only give you a short remembrance of this one thing more; that Jesus was very strong to resist the tempta-

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tions of the devil in the midst of his greatest weakness, and had a great faith and confidence in God in the midst of the greatest dangers and most sudden surprises. His long hunger was not so sharp as to provoke him to take any undue means for its satisfaction. When his disciples awaked him in the middle of a tempest, his heart was not terrified, nor his thoughts disordered, but he gravely reproves the smallness of their faith. He ever held heaven fast by the hand; and whatsoever it was that assayed to shake his constancy, he stood firm, and would not be moved so much as to doubt of the presence and power of God with him. Be you sure to have this faith and powerful confidence of his always in your eye; for you must not expect (as I shall shortly tell you) to pass to Jerusalem without many conflicts. When you are most infirm your enemies will most strongly assault you, and strive to hale and draw you another way. Your afflictions will give them resolution, and in the time of your languishments they will take to themselves the greatest courage. Whatsoever other weakness therefore you labour under, be sure you be not weak in faith; and when all other supports in the world fail you, remember to cleave and adhere closely unto God. Keep awake a sense of his presence with you by often thoughts of him; thrust yourself into his arms continually by a firm trust in him; *be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*, by taking hold of his almighty goodness. And then, let your adversaries be what they will, whether from within or from without; let their armies be never so numerous which are set in battle against you; doubt not but through an holy confidence in God, and the fervent prayer of faith for the aids of his Spirit, they shall all disband and fly away like so many heaps of dust before the wind, and yield you the victory which they promised to themselves. In this assurance I think it is best to seal up the secrets of that sentence which I have been so long disclosing to you. For, though there are many other things remarkable in Jesus (as you will see if you frequently fasten your eyes upon him), yet if I should enumerate them all, I must turn over the leaves of the whole gospel, and unfold them to you. The particulars also that I have mentioned are sufficient to give you such a taste of him, that if you like them you cannot but delight to seek out all the rest yourself; and therefore I shall

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not deprive you of that pleasure, presuming that you are not insensible, from what hath been said, that there is no greater than to know and to follow Jesus.

CHAP. XVI.

Of faith in Jesus. How imperfectly or obscurely it is commonly expressed, to the great danger of Christian pilgrims. What the true notion of it is, which cannot deceive us.

And truly herein he was not mistaken; for though he spoke these last words with an accent very sharp, yet the pilgrim hath often since said that he thought his heart made a shriller echo, and bade him follow Jesus. It is not in the compass of my power to relate the contentment which the poor man took in this discourse. He felt rather an excessive joy than a bare satisfaction, which gave many indications of itself, though it could not be expressed. But the first words, as I remember, which he uttered, when the other made a little stop, was this vehement exclamation:—O sir, how happily have you undeceived me! I have thought sometimes that the way to Jerusalem lay most of all through churches, and that a pilgrim had little else to do but only to hear sermons very oft, and read good books, and make many prayers; and that in these the very life of religion did consist. Nay, I have been persuaded to think that he had no other task but only to believe on Jesus, and that he would take care to carry him to Jerusalem. But, thanks be to God and you, I have now heard another lesson, which I will study to learn my whole life. I find myself already so much in love with Jesus, that I believe I shall carefully mark every step of his holy feet, of which he hath left us any print, and endeavour to tread in them, following of them with as much exactness as I am able. He would have added a great many more protestations of his hearty intentions, but that the guide thought it fit to lay hold on this occasion to instruct him a little further about those things wherein he had been so grossly abused. Having let him know, therefore, that he was no less pleased than himself to see so sudden a fruit of his labours, he proceeded to tell him that he had taught him

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nothing new in all his discourse, nor spoke one syllable but what was comprehended in those few words, if rightly understood, *Believe in the Lord Jesus.* For, though faith in Christ hath sometimes a restrained sense, importing our trust in him for help and succour, yet when it stands alone by itself it hath a more comprehensive meaning. It is so far from denoting such a part of religion as those now mentioned, that it frequently comprises the whole; and it must always be conceived such a part as necessarily implies and infers all the rest. I speak now of the pilgrim's faith, which you must carry along with you: of which whosoever gives you any other description than such as this doth but deceive you, viz. that it is such an hearty persuasion of the truth and goodness of God's promises, and of every thing else that he hath spoken, as makes us obedient in all things to his commands. There is nothing more visible than this in the very first man of the order into which you are entering: Abraham I mean, the most ancient pilgrim that I read of, and the father of faithful travellers; who being commanded by God to leave his own country, his kindred, and his father's house, most readily obeyed, in a persuasion that God would be as good as his word, and bless him with possessions somewhere else. He was the man whom God called to his foot, and who marched whithersoever he would lead him: in resemblance to whom all his children are described in the Christian church as those *who follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes.* Conformity to Jesus is absolutely necessary to make us such believers as shall *inherit the promises.* Though the general notion of faith do not include obedience (being only our persuasion of and assent unto the truth of what is delivered to us upon the testimony of God), yet saving faith, that faith which will carry us to Jerusalem, can never be understood without it. All the definitions you meet with, whatsoever they be, which separate obedience from this faith, I do confidently assure you, are but a mere cheat, and a dangerous illusion. Obedience is so much of the nature of the pilgrim's faith, that, I say it again, it ought to enter its definition: which is as much as to say, that one cannot speak in any terms or phrases which are not deceitful, and liable to be abused, of that faith which will bring us safe to heaven, but he must make mention of the obedience it produces to the commands of our Saviour. This

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is the very thing that distinguishes saving faith from that which is not saving; and therefore if this be left out when we speak of it, we may make men hypocrites sooner than sincere Christians.

But if I may be so bold as to interpose a question (said the learner), I pray satisfy me why you call this the pilgrim's faith: is there any else besides? There is, replied his teacher; we meet in this world with a faith more gallant, fine and delicate, than the plain and homely belief which I have described. A modish and courtly faith it is, which sits still, and yet sets you in the lap of Christ. It passes under so many names, that I cannot stand to number them all now. It is called a casting of ourselves upon Christ, a relying on his merits, a shrouding ourselves under the robes of his righteousness: and though sometimes it is called a going to him for salvation: yet there is this mystery in the business, that you may go, and yet not go; you may go, and yet stand still; you may cast yourself upon him, and not come to him; or if you take one little step, and be at the pains to come to him, the work is done, and you need not follow him. It is indeed a resting, not a travelling grace. And such a grand secret there is in it, that a man may rest before he stir a foot; he may lean on Christ, and approach no nearer him than he was before; he may lay hold on him, and yet remain at the greatest distance from him. It will carry you to the end of your way, before you are at the beginning. The very first step of it is to stay yourself: the beginning of its motion is to be at rest. Do you not see a strange enchantment in it already? Is it not a magical operation, or much beholden to strength of fancy, and the witchcraft of imagination? For my part, I should take myself to be in a far worse condition than Cresinius was, if I should be accused of vending such drugs and dealing in such dangerous charms. I would grant my enemies had cause to exclaim, and should never expect to clear myself, if I stood charged with such incantations. There is no juggling so artificial, whereby I could hope to hide the deceit, if I abused the world with these impostures. My own conscience, I mean, would indict me, and pronounce my condemnation; though I think, if the greatest part of the men among us were to be judges, I need not fear their sentence

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against me. For the charm, I observe, is so powerful, and the fascination of such pleasure, that the numbers are not to be told which are bewitched with it. The multitude goes in crowds in this wide road: the voice of the people cries up this as the only way to heaven. All the lewd men in the world are well contented to take this journey, which may be finished at one step; and to run this race, which may be accomplished in a breath, and for which the last breath in their body may as well serve as any else. There is no man but he lays hold of Christ, and having heard that this is faith, do what you can, it is not possible to beat off his hands. There is not a soul so wicked, but it applies to itself his righteousness, and fancies all its sins to be covered therewith. It is the sweetest thing in the world to cast themselves into his arms, and expect not to go, but to be carried to heaven. They rest on him and him only, for salvation. They rest on him solely for it, that they are loath to stir a foot to contribute any thing toward it. They would have him take all the honour of the business to himself: and are desirous to do not so much as one good action; but leave him to do all, and impute his doings to them. Thus they imagine themselves to be the only advancers of free grace: and they think there are none but they that set the crown upon Christ's head. Such an admirable subtlety there is in this faith, that they can serve their own interest by it, and yet seem all the while to be the best servants of Christ. They can promote their own desires, and yet sound aloud his glory. They can invade his rights as much as they list, and yet be thought the only persons that make it their care he should not be wronged.

Nay, it makes men think that God is beholden to them for being so cautious as to give him nothing. He should not be so much obliged, if they should endeavour to become better. The only qualification that they know of for his favours, is not to be qualified at all to receive them. He owes, it seems, much of glory to their want of virtue. If they should give him more than they do, he would have less. To bring any thing to him, would be to rob him, and take away from him. His grace would lose its name, if they should study to attain it. They should detract very much from the freeness of it, if they should

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provide for any thing but only to receive it. It would not be so rich, if they were not poor and beggarly in all good works. His honour relies very much upon their weakness, and his glory is supported by their imbecility. To be much in debt to him, is the best payment that can be made him. To win his love, it is best to be men of no desert. And to be out of all danger of trusting to their own righteousness, they judge it the surest course to have none at all.

These are the men who make the grace of God so free, that he leaves nothing for himself. The riches of it is so abundant towards them, that he gives away all his own right. He makes such liberal grants to these favourites, that there remains nothing as a duty to him. He takes such a great care of their pleasure, that he forgets his own; and loves to let them have their will so much, that he suffers his own to be crossed for their sake. It is not he, it should seem, but they that rule the world. His will bends to their desires; and since they have no mind to be good, they have invented a way that he may love them, though they continue bad. He sees them not (as they fancy) in themselves, but in a disguise. They do not appear in their own colours, but in another's dress. He doth not behold them naked, but covered in the robes of Christ. And though they have a world of sins, yet they think to have them hid, while he looks upon their garments, and not upon them. And indeed so free is this grace, that he can have no title to their obedience, but only their own gratitude. He holds his kingdom and authority only by their good will. If they do what he desire, it is their kindness, and more than they owe him. Since Christ's obedience is personally imputed to them, he cannot in justice require any at their hands. Since he hath performed the law in their stead, and made his righteousness immediately theirs, he cannot expect that they should perform it too, nor exact any righteousness of their own. For this would be to demand the same debt twice; and to call for the payment of a bond which hath been already satisfied. In fine; he can claim nothing as his due, but must be content with that which they will give him: and it is thought the safest way to give him little or nothing, lest they should at all abate of the freeness of what he is to give.

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I hope your soul will never enter into this secret, nor follow the rabble in these groundless fancies. But you will rather put to your hands to pull down that idol of faith, which hath been set up with so much devotion, and religiously worshipped so long among us: that dead image of faith which so many have adored, trusted in, and perished. I mean the notion which hath been so zealously advanced, how that believing is nothing else but a 'relying on Jesus for salvation;' a 'fiducial recumbency upon him;' a 'casting ourselves wholly upon him and his merits;' or an 'applying of his righteousness to our souls.' And if you throw all those other phrases after them, which tell us that it is a 'taking of Christ,' a 'laying hold of him,' a 'closing with him,' or an 'embracing of him;' you shall do the better, and more certainly secure yourself from being deceived.

For as to these latter expressions is it not visible at the first naming of them, that they are obscure, doubtful and metaphorical words? Is it not as hard to know what it is to take him, and to close with him, as it is to understand what it is to believe? Whatsoever then you have been told of me, I doubt not but you will find that I direct you in a plain and honest path; it being indeed against my nature to like any thing which is intricate, perplexed, and so mysterious that a simple man cannot comprehend it. Who is there that doth not understand me when I say, that to believe is so heartily to give your assent to the truth of the gospel, that you live according to it? What word is there of all these that hath a doubtful meaning? or if ten thousand men should hear them, what possibility is there that among them all there should be found so much as one different sense about them? whereas those words, to take Christ, to embrace him, and close with him, are of such dubious signification, that both the act and the object (as we usually speak) have an ambiguous meaning. There are several ways of taking, and embracing: and by Christ is sometimes meant his person, and sometimes his gospel, or doctrine. Now if to take, be with our mind and heart to allow, approve, assent to any thing; then to take Christ, in the first sense of that word, is to acknowledge him for the Son of God; the promised seed which he said should be sent into the world. And to take him in the other is nothing else but that which I told you; to

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assent in such manner to all that is said of him; or he hath said in the Gospel, that we become obedient to his word. To what purpose then is it to use these phrases, when there are better at hand whereby we must explain them? Since this must be said which I have told you, why cannot it be said at first? When things can be clearly expressed, why should we choose to speak them darkly? especially since there can be no fruit of it but only this, that men are longer before they understand us; and perhaps at the first hearing of what we speak obscurely, their minds are impressed with some such dangerous sense which they form to themselves, that all our explications cannot blot it out. It is of great moment what men's souls are first imprinted withal. They will retain those words; and perchance think good to make the exposition according to their own fancy. Why should not our words therefore carry their interpretation in them? or what should make us love to talk in such terms, that we cannot be certainly apprehended unless we talk a great deal more?

Of that, said the traveller, (who was desirous to know all he could in this matter,) I would willingly be informed by yourself. You would oblige me very much if you could think fit to resolve your own question. For, truly, I love so dearly to understand what I hear, (as, thanks be to God, I do what you say,) that I wonder any men should go to seek for hard words when those that are plain do thrust themselves into their mouths.

I meant not, replied the guide, to draw my discourse to this inquiry; but only to express to you, by those questions, the unreasonableness of such men's proceedings. Yet since it is your desire, and I am not willing to deny you any thing, you shall know what I conceive in this matter, provided you will be content with that answer which lies uppermost in my thoughts and offers itself first to my mind.

They are not in love, I am apt to think, with such a definition of faith as I have given you, because it is pilgrim-like, plain as a pikestaff. It is in this case as in many other: there are a company of men in the world who despise any thing

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which they understand easily, and imagine there is no great matter in it if it be presently intelligible. They admire that most which they do not comprehend, and conceive there is some mystery and depth in it if it be difficult to be explained. Just as you see abundance of men affect hard words, nay, bombastic language and a fustian kind of dialect; though there be no greater eloquence than to speak naturally and with facility of expression; so there are as many who love things obscurely delivered and which have a cloud about them, though it be the perfection of our understandings to render our conceptions clear and easy to enter into the most vulgar capacities. As they think him an orator who mounts and soars aloft (as they call it) in high-flown words, so they take him for a deep divine, whose notions of things are so expressed as they cannot presently sound and dive to the bottom of them. Hence it is that they contemn such a familiar, plain, and facile explication of the word *faith* as doth not intricate a man's conceptions, but can at first sight be apprehended; and they had rather have you speak of it in metaphorical or borrowed words, which, belonging more properly to other things than they do to this, make an uncertain sound, and leave the mind in confusion. If you say that it is a taking of Christ, of whole Christ, an applying of what he hath done to the soul, a cleaving to him, or in such like words express yourself; all these seem to have more of mystery and gospel secrets in them than the poor pilgrim-phrase hath: and so they win more credit with those men who are not wont to like any thing which every child may understand as well as themselves. Besides, it must be confessed, that such words as those do not touch the bottom of the heart, nor so instantly penetrate to the very quick as the other plainly do, and so they must needs be better accepted in the world. They do not so necessarily and clearly imply men's obedience to our Lord, which in this that I mention is in direct terms expressed; and so they will be sure to meet with kinder welcome and entertainment.

He was proceeding to add some other words much to the same effect, when the pilgrim, begging his pardon for diverting him from his main discourse, told him that he was too much satisfied in the truth of what he said, and desired to hear

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no more of this folly of mankind. But what think you (added he) of those other descriptions of faith which tell us that it is a relying upon our Saviour? cannot every body understand this language as well as that which you speak? I grant it, answered the director; but if it be not liable to the first defect which I objected, it is notoriously guilty of the last and worst: for there is in it nothing of our obedience. As the former were faulty in regard of their obscurity, so this is manifestly chargeable with lameness and imperfection. You shall be convinced of the truth of this imputation in a very few words. For, first, the most that can be made of this reliance on Christ for salvation is, that it is one act of faith; but there wants a great number more to make up an entire body of Christian belief. And, secondly, as it is but one single act, so it is far from being the first, but must suppose many others that go before it. As, for example, it is necessary we be persuaded that Jesus is the Christ of God, that what he hath spoken in the gospel is his will, and that if we hope for salvation by him we must be conformed in all things to this will of God. And then, thirdly, these persuasions or acts of faith that thus precede must produce a sincere and cordial obedience to his laws before we can reasonably arrive at this confidence of relying upon him for salvation. Now why this particular act of faith should be alone mentioned in the definition of it, which is but one, and not the first nor chief, and all the rest left out, is past my capacity to understand. When our faith hath rendered us obedient to him, then we may take the boldness to persuade ourselves that he will save us; and this is nothing but an obedience to his command also, who hath bid us trust him, and take his word that he will be the Saviour of all faithful persons. But it is a presumption to do it sooner, and the ready course to destroy the religion of Christ to advance such an hasty and forward belief in men's souls.

And therefore let me beseech you, as you love your soul, to be a follower of faithful Abraham, who (as I told you) was the founder of your order: remember that such as he was such must you be, if you hope to come to Jerusalem and inherit the land of promise: and that in his example you meet with nothing earlier than this, that *by faith, when he was called to*

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go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, he obeyed, and went out, not knowing whither he went[a]. This was the first thing wherein his faith employed itself, and the last was like unto it: for, when he was tried by God, he offered up his only-begotten son, who was to be the heir of that inheritance which was promised to him. From this active faith, no doubt, it is that he and all good Christians are called *faithful*, and not from a lazy recumbency on Christ for salvation, or the strongest application of his merits to their souls. If these were sufficient to make a person of that denomination, then we need no better character of a *faithful servant* or *steward* (which the holy writings sometimes mention) than such an one as follows. He is a person that relies upon his master's merits; and depends only on the worth and sufficiency of his lord: he trusts in his goodness for a pardon of all his faults, and hopes he will esteem him a good servant because he is a good master: he leans upon his arm, and clasps fast about him, and is resolved not to let him go till he have paid him his wages: he embraces him kindly, and hopes he will account him righteous because he is so himself. And, in one word, he applies to himself all the good works that his master hath performed; and prays to be excused if he do not his business, because that his lord can do it better. Is not this a very ridiculous description? or would you be content to be thus served? Do not imagine then that God will be served after this fashion; or that such an ill-favoured notion as this is the best that can be found to compose the definition of a true believer. But first do all that you can, and then acknowledge yourself an unprofitable servant. Let it be your care to follow your work, and then rely only upon the goodness of our Lord to give you a reward. Be sure that you be inwardly righteous, and then, no doubt, the righteousness of Christ will procure you acceptance, and bring you to that happiness which you can no ways deserve.

[a] [Heb. xi. 8.]

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CHAP. XVII.

What place prayer, hearing of sermons, reading of good books, receiving the sacrament, have in the religion of Jesus; and of what use they are to pilgrims.

And, that you may be able to make a better judgment of what I have said, and I may also return to the occasion and beginning of this discourse, let me entreat you to consider well the nature and ends of prayer to God. It is manifest, from the life of Jesus, that it is but a part of that duty and obedience that we owe to God; and yet it is a powerful means to bring us to all the rest. It is the converting and turning about of our minds and hearts to the Original of our being. It is our reflecting and looking back upon him from whom we came. It is our circling and winding about (as heathens themselves have well conceived) to that point from which we took our beginning, that we may be fast united to God, and never be divided from him. It is an acknowledgment of God in all his perfections: an expression of our dependence and subjection; an oblation of ourselves, both soul and body to him. Think therefore to what purposes it most naturally serves; for, it being a thing of daily use, you may judge thereby what the great business of Christianity or believing is. Doth it minister chiefly to our confidence of being saved; and are we to swell ourselves by this breath with great hopes that we are beloved of God? Or rather is it not most properly subservient to the putting of us into a state of salvation, and the rendering us fit objects of the divine love? It is not intended to inspire us with conceits that we are the children of God, but to breathe into us the spirit of sons, and to impress upon us the image of him upon whom we fix our eyes. It is the elevation of our minds to him, and the fastening of our eyes upon him, in order to our being made more like him. It is the oblation of ourselves to his uses and service, and not of giving of ourselves to be saved by him. Here we place our minds in the brightness of his heavenly light: here we expose our cold affections to the warmth and heat of the Sun of Righteousness. We behold our Lord most clearly in these devout meditations; and, by the

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frequency of them we shall learn his carriage and gestures, and conform all our actions to the excellent model of his. I beseech you, descend into your own heart, and if you know what it is to pray, tell me what faith it is which you feel then most stirring in your heart. Is it only a reliance on Christ and an application of his merits to your soul? Or is it not rather a vigorous application of your mind to him, that you may feel him more, begetting and promoting his life in your heart? Is it not a strong desire to be touched by him, to be impressed with his likeness, to be joined to him and made one spirit with him; and, in one word, that you may be made more ready and disposed to every good work? I will evidently convince you that this is the great end of prayer, and consequently the main work of believing on the Son of God.

We are, you know, of kin to two worlds, and placed in the middle between heaven and earth. With our heads we touch the one, and with our feet we stand upon the other. Man is the common term wherein these two meet and are combined. By his superior faculties he holds communion with the inward and spiritual world, and by his lower he feels the outward and corporeal. But there is a great difference between the correspondence which we hold with one, and that which we maintain with the other. For to this sensible world we lie open and bare, but between us and the invisible world there is a gross cloud and veil of flesh which interposes. Or, to speak more plainly, our senses have nothing that comes between them and their objects to hinder their free approach to them; whereas our understanding hath those very objects wherewith they are prepossessed, to interrupt the light of celestial things which shine upon it. The outward man is continually exposed to the strokes of the things of this outward world, and without any difficulty or pains is moved by them; but our mind is not so patent to the things of the other, nor is our will so easily inclined by them. For they being already impressed and engaged by sensible objects, these lie between us and the higher regions; and they having enjoyed a long familiarity with them before we received notice of any thing else beside, it will require some labour to bring us and those nobler objects together. In short, the senses have nothing else to do, but only

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to receive those things which present themselves before them, nor are they solicited by any other enjoyments: but our minds and wills are haled two ways, and solicited by this world as well as by the other; so to perceive that which is divine, we must remove this out of the way, and pull our souls from those thoughts and desires wherein these lower things have entangled our hearts. Unless our understanding draw herself aside to the contemplation of divine truths, and thereby carry the will to the taste of an higher good, it cannot be avoided but that we become mere men of this world, and by being wholly carnal, lose our acquaintance with the other celestial country. We shall be altogether fraught with fleshly opinions and affections, and have nothing remaining in us of a spiritual sense. This therefore breeds an absolute necessity of constant holy meditation and devout prayers. By the one of which our mind, being abstracted from and elevated beyond the things of corporeal sense, is brought to a converse and familiarity with heavenly motions; and by the other our will is possessed with spiritual inclinations, nay, ravished into the embraces of a divine good. Meditation furnishes our understanding with right opinions and noble thoughts; and prayer carries our will to the love of them, and joins our affections fast unto them. By the one we are tied in our mind, and by the other in our choice to the better world. This, it is manifest, is the natural and true use of these devout exercises; to dispose our souls by drawing them away from these inferior enjoyments to receive communications from above, and to be made partakers of a divine nature. There is no question to be made of it, that God loves to impart himself to rational beings: but in what manner, I beseech you, can he do it, unless it be by our understandings and wills rightly disposed? And what other end therefore can these two have which put us in a fit disposition and capacity for him, than to bring us to that true knowledge and love of him, whereby we partake of his nature? In these you must employ yourself, and they are to be thought more necessary than any other business; but yet you see they are but the means and way to a divine state, and have something beyond themselves which they are to effect; and that is the bringing of us to the life of the blessed Jesus.

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If prayer be not thus designed, and do not produce such fruit, it is so far from procuring us acceptance with God, (though it be top full of that faith which relies upon Christ,) that it proves a thing very fulsome and displeasing unto him. It is a mere noise and clamour in his ears, than which there cannot be any thing more troublesome and offensive. He loves not to be disturbed with such sounds as have nothing in them but flattery and nauseous commendations of him. He cares not for being extolled by such unhallowed mouths. It is a great injury to him to be praised and magnified by evil-doers. He hates the pretences of their friendship, and loathes the compliments which they load him withal. He cannot endure to have his courts filled with these impudent people, lest he should be thought such an one as themselves. As the sacrifices of old were esteemed no better than murders, and all the offerings but so many butcheries which were committed, when they left themselves behind, and brought not their hearts and affections to be offered up to God; so are all men's confident prayers and devotions now no better than profanations of his name, and a kind of blasphemy or evil speaking of him; while they are enemies to the life of God and despisers of good works. They do most basely reproach him in the world, by taking upon them the title of his greatest favourites. They expose him to scorn by appropriating to themselves the name of his servants. There cannot be a greater wrong to him than to make men believe that he is a lover of such filthy hypocrites. You have observed, no doubt, that the sacrifices in ancient times were called the *meat of God*, and the food or provision that was made for his house. And yet in the company of evil works they are said to be an abomination to him; and he professes that he had as lief they had brought him a dog as offer a lamb, and that a swine would have been as acceptable as the fattest of their bullocks. He protests that his soul abhorred their new moons and solemn assemblies; that their incense was an unsavoury stink, and that the fat and blood of their beasts were no better than their dung and ordure. He bids them bring him no more vain oblations. He saith that he was full of them, and nauseated the table that they spread for him. And in plain terms he lets them know that it was to no purpose to multiply their prayers, for he could

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not hear them. And so truly may you assure yourself, that though pious prayers are now most prevalent and forcible with him, yet the grunting of swine or howling of wolves is altogether as welcome, as the clamorous petitions of those who sue for his love without any thorough amendment of their lives. He detests those bawling worshippers, who intend nothing else but to drown the cry of their sins, and to make him deaf to the accusations which their iniquity brings against them. Their breath is an unwholesome and infectious vapour, which poisons the world, and is the pest of religion. Their meetings and assemblies are so many conspiracies against the authority and life of God. Their words do but wound his ears, and their loud cries are but so many assaults and batteries against heaven. He hates to see those hands lifted up unto him, which will instantly be lifted up against him. He cannot endure they should lay hold on him, and esteems such rude attempts to be the committing of a rape upon his mercy, and an endeavour to force his favour. He hath opened no way for such bold access unto him. He never intended to encourage such impudence. Their zeal is a strange fire which kindles another in heaven against them. And notwithstanding all their fawnings upon him, the dogs which follow them to the place of their assemblies shall as soon be accepted as themselves. And therefore be sure to make your prayers touch your own heart, before you expect they should reach heaven. Let them work upon yourself, before you assume a confidence that they will have the desired effect upon God.

And now I have little to say concerning the hearing of sermons, reading of the Bible, and other good books, (which you say there are many think do compose the whole of a religious life,) for it is plain enough they can have no other end than to furnish your mind with pious meditations, and dispose your will to prayer and all other holy duties. You cannot well think that these have any other place in the godly life than that of instruments and helps whereby to arrive at it. And it is very easy to know, from what hath been discoursed, what sermons are most to be regarded. Not those which give your fancy a pleasure and tickle your imagination; but those which powerfully enlighten your understanding, and move your will

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to the choice of that which is right and good. There are too many of those frivolous hearers, who are more pleased with little jingles and the tinkling of words, than with the most persuasive arguments which the most piercing reason in the world can urge upon their hearts. But their punishment is heavy enough for this levity; they being condemned for ever to be fools or children, whose minds are enchanted with the rhyming of words, or with their countermarching and the ringing of changes upon them, or other such like adulterate ware, which would fain pass for wit and elegance. Next to the love of gibberish and of canting phrases, there is no greater dotage than this, of courting the diseases, corruptions, and the rotten carcase of eloquence, and slighting the life and spirit of it. One would wonder that reasonable souls should delight in toying and playing with letters and syllables. There is nothing more strange unless it be this; that there are a company of men to be found who are at a great deal of pains to trim themselves with these tinsel ornaments, and with much curiosity study to speak absurdly. It is not their negligence, but they take a care to trifle. They do not slip unawares into childish expressions, but they fall into them by design.

But if you would be wise and good, you must open your ears to plain words and strong sense; to proper and significant language, which brings along with it powerful and convincing arguments; to that which strikes and penetrates into the soul, and doth not merely glide smoothly over the surface of it. You must not come to be tickled, but to be taught; not to be pleased, but to be made better; not that a man may speak to your gust, but to your necessities. You must not think you have spent your time well when the truth peeps into your soul, but stops at the door; or when your will is slightly moved, and then stands still: but when the light pierces into your mind, and makes a broad day there; when a secret fire creeps into your veins, and continues to burn in your heart; when all your affections are carried away, and remain in the possession of truth.

And for this purpose you must read the holy Scriptures themselves, not to store your mind with high notions, or to

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replenish it with a large furniture and matter of discourse, or to find support for some of your opinions; but to get a stock of efficacious reasons for well-doing, and to overpower your heart, by the force of them, to consent unto it.

And let this be your rule also in reading other pious books: for there are too many who regard only the lightest things in any discourse, the fringes, the lace, and other ornaments, more than they do the body itself. They note the pretty stories, the apt similitudes, and here and there a small sentence which smites their fancy; but mind not the clear reasons, the nervous arguments, and much less the whole scope and design of the treatise which they read: much like some writers we have seen, who, reporting the history of their times, take notice of little more than of joustings and tournaments, of bear-baitings and launching of ships, and such like frivolous matters, which are of no moment: or like those beggars, who, travelling many countries, behold a great number of fair buildings, but know nothing either of the persons or the furniture, or the order and regular form which is to be observed in them.

I think it is not amiss to add, that this likewise is the end you ought to propound to yourself in all your conferences with wise and pious souls, who may give you great assistance in your journey to Jerusalem; not to breed in yourself an opinion that you are religious because you frequent their company, but to receive greater illumination of mind from their torches, and to have your heart warmed with a greater love to God at their holy fires.

And here it will be seasonable, at the conclusion of this discourse, to admonish you of a thing which may do you very much service, and save you abundance of trouble which else may arise in your mind. There are many things, as you see, that will further you in well-doing, viz. prayer, reading and hearing the word of God, meditation, conference with good men, and such like. Some of these, you must understand, will serve your purpose at one time, and some at another, according as you are disposed, and they shall be found efficacious for the end to which they are designed. There is a great variety

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also in these, of which you may make an advantage, if you choose that use and practice of them which you shall find to have most power in it at the present to withdraw your mind from worldly vanities, to mortify your passions, and to establish your will in the love of Jesus. As for instance; sometimes it will be fit for you to meditate, and sometimes to pray, and sometimes to converse with your friends; and it is not so much to be asked which of these you shall choose, as which of them will best at that instant advance you in your way, and move your will with the greatest force to virtuous actions. And then, in meditation, there is the life of Christ and his death; his resurrection and his glory; his coming again to judgment, and the life of the world to come; the long experience you have had of his goodness; the instances which he daily gives of his providence; the example of all his saints; and an hundred things besides, to exercise your thoughts, and have a great virtue in them to make you do your duty toward God and man. In like manner, there are sundry books, in the reading of which you may employ your time (though I would rather have you choose the best than a multitude); and several ways of praying and addressing your petitions to God, which may every one of them have their places and seasons according as you shall be disposed to serve your soul of them. And therefore if you perceive that some of them, through custom and long use, do in time lose their savour and their power to increase the love of God in you, and it seems to you there may be more profit in another way, take that new course, and leave the former without any scruple. For that meditation which will not now affect you, at another time will prove more efficacious than any else; and that way of opening your soul to God, which now you forsake, will come about again to be in use. Only of this you must take a great care, to stir up yourself to a continual attendance upon the public service of God: for that is a necessary acknowledgment of his supreme authority and dominion in the world; and though you feel yourself indisposed, dull, and heavy at certain times in these addresses, yet there is this good always done, that by your very presence there you have paid part of your homage to him, have owned him to be your Lord and Governor, and confessed that he is worthy of all honour and service. But as for the

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rest, though the inclination and resolution of your heart to love Jesus, and to be like to him, must be unchangeable, nevertheless, the ways and means which are to be employed to the nourishing and strengthening of your resolution may and ought to be changed, according as you feel yourself disposed and find them to be effectual.

But especially let me remember you of this advice, which was long since given me by a good man, not to bind yourself unalterably to voluntary customs. Since these are imposed upon us by ourselves, we may grant ourselves a release when we see it most convenient, and not tie ourselves unto them as if there were an indispensable obligation lying upon our conscience. The rigorous observance of these doth always hinder the freedom of the heart in the love of Jesus, when a better course to promote us in it doth present itself to our choice. And therefore do not think there is any necessity that you should always pray in the same way, or pray so long, or read so many chapters in a day, or study such a book whereby you have reaped much benefit, or think every day of the very same things; but you are at liberty to do in these matters as shall most conduce to the ends for which they serve, and that is, the quickening of you to live agreeably to the rules of sobriety, righteousness, and godliness. Be not timorous and fearful of stepping aside out of your ordinary course, when you only leave what you have bound upon yourself by your own will, and go to do the will of God. If we can do well, what matter is it though it be not in the form that we have prescribed? If our business be effected, why should we trouble our heads because it was not done in the order and method that we appointed? Is it not a madness to deny ourselves a natural happiness because we cannot have it according to the precepts of art? It is just as if a man would not speak nor hear reason unless it be in mode and figure; or as if a man would not be saved from drowning unless a friend would bring a boat to fetch him out of the water; or as if a captive prince should refuse to satisfy his hunger unless all his servants and attendants were admitted to wait upon him. What a sottish obstinacy is this, thus to adhere to our rules! what a rigorous justice is it that makes us unjust to ourselves! What should we do with this scrupulous piety, which claps fetters and bolts upon our

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own legs? We should wonder if a man, to observe some unnecessary terms of law, should suffer all laws to perish; and it is no less strange, if to maintain some free impositions we sustain a loss in the most necessary improvements of our souls. This extreme right is an extreme injury. It would be an offence against reason not to offend here against a form; and we should very much depart from God, if we did not here depart a little from ourselves.

To this let me add another thing, which it will be profitable to you to be advised of; which is, that when you are following Jesus in acts of justice or charity, or any of the rest, you do as strongly attract and draw down the blessing of heaven upon you as by the best devotions which you perform upon your knees. You do not think, I believe, that they are the words which you speak that have any virtue to charm the celestial powers, but that the love to God which is expressed in prayer invites him to come and dwell with you. Now this love is testified as much in other actions of an holy life, especially when we deny ourselves any sensible good in the performance of them; and therefore they cannot choose but reinforce our prayers, and redouble our petitions, and call still for new grace to make us able to do better. Besides, it is to be considered, that doing of good being the use and improvement of that grace of God which we obtain by our prayers, it must needs entitle us to the right which the promise of God gives us of more grace to be added unto that which we have already received. We render to God hereby his own with usury and increase, and so cannot miss of procuring more talents to be lent unto us. And indeed, if you enter into a strict examination of things, you will find that every act of virtue hath the very same effect upon the understanding and will which I attributed to prayer itself. For there is nothing more enlightens the mind in the knowledge of good than the experience and taste which the practice of it gives us; and the will is so effectually determined hereby to the choice of it, that it gets an habit, and naturally propends unto it. There is nothing can more dispose the soul to well-doing than the doing well; and we are never more secure of the help of God's good Spirit than when we follow the motions of it.

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Behold then what a dangerous rock doth here discover itself, upon which many have dashed, and split themselves, and perished. Men think there is no communion with God but what is held by prayer, and such like holy duties. Nay, as if this was all we have to do for maintaining friendship with him, it hath engrossed the name of duty, and enclosed the greatest part of religion in itself. A strange conceit! as if in the constant exercise of an holy life we did not keep a fellowship with him, by doing the same that he doth, and showing forth his virtues to the world. Is there any thing more visible than that by righteousness, charity, patience, and such like, we approach to God, and are made partakers of him? Do we not feel him by these things? Are we not made one spirit and nature with him? Doth he not dwell in us, and we in him? What is the reason then that men confine divine communion to prayer and receiving of the sacrament, as if we never enjoyed him but in these immediate addresses to him? What is it that makes them imagine God is here to be found, and no where else? they know not sure what it is to pray, and partake of those holy mysteries. They fancy it is but the pouring out such a number of words, or the stirring of some devout affections in them. These they conceive will put them in the favour of God, and secure them there without any further labour. Which hath caused, it is like, the corrupted church to increase the number of sacraments, and create a great many more than God hath made. For it is an easy matter to receive these seals of grace, and there is no such repugnance to them in our fleshly nature as there is to the life of Jesus. Hence it is that men would have the whole sum of religion to be contained in these small volumes. They would have all piety cloistered up in these narrow walls; and are loath to give it a larger compass. Within these limits they would willingly have it confined, and not have it walk abroad in our common conversation in the world. But if they had any true relish of virtue, they would soon discern that these holy duties are preparations for whatsoever else we have to do. They are so far from excluding all the rest, that they include them every one, and carry them in their bosom. All the virtues resort hither at the time when these are to be performed. Here they all agree to meet, and (as I may speak) to keep their general rendezvous, the better

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to strengthen and advance each other. At these holy retirements they all come together to consult for the preserving of their common interest. There is not one of them absent when we pray as we ought, or address ourselves in due manner to the table of the Lord. Then they assemble themselves to join in one band, in order to the making a more powerful impression upon their enemies; and to increase their strength, the better to encounter them at all times else. They are all in action at once upon these occasions; and by their united force do more mightily engage the will to the love of them at all other seasons. When we pray, we make a solemn acknowledgment of God in all his attributes. We confess him to be the cause of all things. We extol his sovereign power and supremacy over all creatures. We acknowledge his independency, and ourselves to live and move and have our being in him. We ascribe to him liberty and freedom, in that it is in his will and choice what, and when, and how much we shall enjoy. We give him the glory of his fulness and all-sufficiency, of his immensity, his omnisciency, his eternity and immutability, his goodness and bounty, and whatsoever other excellencies belong unto him. We humble ourselves also before him. We profess our faith and confidence in him for all that he hath promised. We hope in his mercy: and resign our souls and bodies into his hands to be governed by his holy laws. Prayer is the silence of our souls; the stillness and calm of all our passions; the satisfaction and contentment of our desires; and, in one word, it is the union of our wills with the divine.

And if you turn your eye from hence to the holy sacrament of Christ's body and blood, there you will find the very same concourse of all the graces to assist at that solemn time. They all conspire to be present then to wait upon our Lord, and to improve themselves by exerting their utmost vigour and strength in that holy action. The very business and employment of a Christian soul at that feast is to celebrate the divine goodness with our highest praises, to profess ourselves the disciples and followers of the crucified Jesus, to express the greatest passion of love to him, to offer our souls and bodies to his service, to accept of his yoke and take his cross upon our shoulders, to embrace each other with a fervent charity, to

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open our hearts unto all the world, to excite ourselves to the doing of good, and to proclaim forgiveness to all that have done us evil. Here all our troublesome passions are laid asleep, and dare not so much as stir, being now in the presence of our Lord. They are all hushed and still, out of the reverence they bear to him and his sovereign authority. Here we can neither be careful, nor angry, nor fearful, nor desirous of any other thing but only him and his love. Nay, here all the inordinacy of them is quelled, subdued and brought under the government of his laws. They are not only cast into a sleep, but mortified and slain at the sight of the passion of our Lord. Anger and hatred give up the ghost, and yield themselves victims to his conquering love. All our care for the world expires into the bosom of God. All fear vanishes, and turns into faith and trust in his providence. All pride and vainglory dies at the feet of his humble majesty. The impure desires of the flesh receive their mortal wound, when we feel the pangs and agonies and travail of his soul. There is nothing left but an indignation at our sinful selves, a care to please him, an holy fear to offend him, an hatred of the very garment spotted with the flesh; a love of piety, and an ambition to be like to this holy Saviour. It would be too long, if I should tell you how all the life of Jesus was at once expressed in his death; and how, as he hung upon the cross, he acted all the virtues which he had so long preached and practised. But you will soon discern by your own observation, if you please but to look upon him in that last scene of his tragedy, that he never gave greater instances of his humility, charity, meekness, patience, confidence in God, and contempt of the world, than when he left it in those shameful and ignominious torments. And therefore since this crucified Jesus is so lively set before our eyes in this holy sacrament, we must either shut our eyes, or else he will imprint such an image, and draw such a picture of himself upon our hearts, that all those graces will shine together there.

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CHAP. XVIII.

Of the many enemies he was to expect that would assault his resolution: some from within, some from without. Of their subtleties and various arts to deceive.

HERE the good man made a pause: the other seeming as if he had a mind to interpose some doubt, or to make some observation upon what had been said. But he modestly praying him to proceed, and telling him that he had no desire to do any thing but only to hearken to his instructions, which would sooner tire the giver than the receiver; it was no long stop to his speech, which thus continued. I am so desirous you should think it is easier to understand than to follow the Christian course which leads to Jerusalem, that I would have you know there remains not much more to be added, than what relates to those things which have been already spoken. But you having thus disposed of your affairs, and put yourself in such good order as I have directed, it will be time to begin your journey in God's name thither. Only be sure at your setting out, that you confirm the vow you have made by setting to it the seal of that holy sacrament of which I have now discoursed. It will be a very good *viaticum* for you, and in the strength of this food you may travel many days: still looking at Jesus whom you beheld there so feelingly represented. And truly you will find there is great need of fortifying yourself very well, for I must let you know, that at your first stepping out of doors, before you have gone many paces, you will be encountered with a world of enemies of several sorts, that will beset you round about, and boldly assault your resolution of going to Jerusalem. We are told indeed, as I have heard some relate out of Diodore of Sicily[a], that among the ancient Indians there were certain officers appointed on purpose to take care of travellers and strangers, and to see that nobody did them any wrong. And if it chanced that any such person did fall sick, they provided a physician for him, with all other things that the necessities of such a condition did require. If he died they gave him a decent burial; and if he had any money or goods about him, they took care to have them

[a] [Biblioth. lib. ii. cap. 42.]

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restored to his heirs, if they could be found. But now you will very much deceive yourself if you expect such kind usage from the world, or think to be preserved in your travels from their injuries and affronts. There is not so much Christianity left among them as will equal the virtue of those pagans. Men are more busy in passing the sentence of damnation upon them, than in condemning themselves for not excelling and outstripping the piety of infidels. They take care for little else but to have it believed, that those heathens shall not be saved notwithstanding all their good works; and that they themselves shall be saved notwithstanding their barrenness of them. They will be so far from doing you any good, that they will not stick to do you harm. They who you would think should be a guard to you, may prove the most dangerous enemies, and take an opportunity to rifle you. There are many will be forward to offer you their service, but it is because they would willingly have an occasion to betray you. They would be content no doubt to bury you, but it is because they are glad that they see you dead. And yet you must not think that evil men will be your only or your greatest opposers; for there are sundry others, as I told you, that will be ready to join their forces with them, and such as are of a more dangerous and malignant disposition. There is never a thing you see in the world but it may prove an adversary, and endeavour to hinder you in your journey: but there are many besides more potent which you do not see, that will back and second them in their mischievous design. Though they disagree never so much among themselves in other things, yet they will all combine together and conspire in this, to use their utmost skill and endeavour to check your desires, and break your purposes, or at least to give you many discouragements that may stop you in your course, and hinder your going forward to Jerusalem. I have known many pilgrims of great courage and undaunted resolution, and yet I could never hear of any whom more or fewer of these armed enemies had not the hardiness to set upon: and some I have been acquainted with, who were either forced or persuaded by them to make a retreat after they were well advanced in their way thither. And therefore you must not think you shall be such a privileged soul as to escape their assaults; since heroical virtue could never terrify them from

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making a proof of its constancy and valour. And you must not think neither that they are without stratagems and subtle arts to deceive those whose strength they cannot overmaster. They will spare neither lies, nor flatteries, nor bribes, nor fine entertainments (if they see that violence is like to effect nothing) to corrupt your mind, and induce you to change once more and return home again to those enjoyments which you have quit and left behind you. There is nothing so afflicts them as to see a soul in love with Jesus, and resolutely bent to travel for to find him. This urges them to use their greatest industry and wit to extinguish that good will, with the loss of which they know your journey will cease and come to nothing. Against these therefore you must be well provided, that when they come and make an impression upon you, it may find such a noble resistance, that it may fly back with shame in their own faces, and only set a mark of honour and token of victory upon yours. And truly to expect and look for them is half way to a conquest: their greatest advantage lying in the security of a soul which fears no danger. Which makes this warning that I give you beforehand the more necessary, because it is a part of your armour, and not only an alarm to make you careful to be well appointed.

I believe you are desirous to have some list of these enemies; and therefore I think fit to let you know that you will find none more forward to set upon you than some within yourself. The fleshly desires, I mean, and the worldly fears of your own naughty heart, who, the more they have found you a friend to them heretofore, will now become the more pestilent enemies, and do you the greater mischief. These will be very unwilling that you should do so much as pray, or meditate with any seriousness of Jesus and Jerusalem; and much more opposite will they be to the life of sobriety and self-denial which they see you entering upon. If their consent were first to be obtained, you should not stir so much as one foot in this way wherein I have directed you. They would murmur and repine most sadly; they would put a thousand jealousies in your mind, and remember you of as many services which you owe them, without the performance of which they can never rest contented. And therefore when you have made a little

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progress, and tasted some of the difficulties of your way; then is the opportunity of the flesh to set in strongly with its reasons, and to suggest to you that it is a course not to be endured. It cannot be expected that in so fit an occasion it should be silent, but that it should entreat you of all loves not to be so cruel as to proceed in your purpose, and to deny it those satisfactions which are not to be met withal in such a dismal road. Sometimes it will cry out of the injuries that have been done it, and complain of the violence that temperance hath offered to its pleasures, and the robberies which the poor have committed upon its goods, with other intolerable wrongs of the same nature. And sometimes it will shriek and cry out for fear of the danger and hardships that are still ensuing, and will be sure, as it fancies, to make a total spoil of all its contentments. And though many of these piteous lamentations be neglected by you, yet it will not cease; it is like to follow you with them; and at some seasons plainly to grapple with you, and struggle for the victory. And since, after some difficulties that are overcome, there may well be supposed others to be remaining that will try your constancy; these will be sure to be represented to you in a very formidable shape, and made to appear far bigger and vaster than really they are: that so your fleshly desires may have the fairer pretence to wish you to consult for your ease and safety both together, by returning back to the place from whence you came. Many evil spirits likewise, there is no doubt, will join themselves to this party: and observing the best advantage that shall arise, they will use all the sleights, and temptations, and power that they are masters of, to entice or draw your heart from the love of Jesus, and make you weary of prosecuting your purpose of going to him. But whatsoever any or all of these shall say, and in whatsoever form they shall make either their addresses or assaults; believe not a word they speak, or rather stop your ears as much as you can to all their charms. And be sure at least to betake yourself to that one secure remedy which I told you of, answering thus unto them: I desire nought but the love of Jesus, and to be with him in peace at Jerusalem. This word will drive them all away, as having no hopes to find any room in those souls that are full of such desires. And unless you cease to say and think that, or you give it but a cold resemblance, they will let you

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go on in your way thither without any further disturbance from such persuasions.

But yet when they see that they cannot be admitted at this door, they will try to enter in at another; or at least they will endeavour to repress the forwardness of your course, and to make your way intricate and perplexed. For finding that you cannot be persuaded to be in love with them, or any of their confederates, they will begin to throw scruples and fears into your mind, that you may bear an affection to some or other of them. When they cannot disturb your passions, they will be so subtle as to trouble your fancy. And when they cannot persuade you to break off your journey, they will labour to possess you with a conceit that you have not yet prepared yourself sufficiently for it. They will often be stirring up such thoughts as these in your mind; that you have not washed yourself clean enough by sorrow and contrition for your sins, that your conscience hath not been thoroughly searched, nor your faults duly confessed, nor your heart rightly humbled, and deeply afflicted: and therefore that it would be best for you to return again, at least for so short a space till you may be better purged, and so the better provided for travel. With much speciousness, and very fair shows of faithful counsel, will all this be represented: and they will make you believe, if they can, that you cannot please God better than by going back to the very place where you first began, in order to prepare yourself with more exactness for such a long journey. But do not give any credit to a syllable of all this, nor think yourself obliged to ransack your conscience all over again, and to spend your time in I know not what pensiveness and tiresome humiliations. For these courses may endanger to keep you always at home; either because you will never think that you know the bottom of your heart, or because you will still seem not to be sorrowful and penitent enough, or because these horrors will even affright you from religion, and make you think (as I have known some do) that it is impossible to be saved. At least these things will put you into uncouth and unknown ways, and make others think that piety is madness. They will hinder you also exceeding much, so that (if you go on at all, yet) you will travel very slowly, and be a most tedious time before you come at

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Jesus. Say therefore to these scruples, when they buzz in your ears, I am nought, I have nought, &c. I have sunk myself as low as I can in my own esteem, I have forsaken all, and carry nothing in my heart, as he knows, but only Jesus and Jerusalem, and therefore molest me not in my passage to them.

And if they shall still proceed to tell you (upon the discovery of this artifice to deceive you) that it is too great a boldness for such a person as you to think to see Jesus and Jerusalem; if they say that you are not worthy of his favour, nor ought to be so presumptuous as to hope for it; answer them again in the very same words,—I am nought, I have nought, &c. I know as well as you can tell me that I am unworthy of any thing, and much more of his favour; but therefore it is that I desire him, and am going to him, that I may have some worthiness by resembling him. I do not presume upon my own deserts, but upon his love; nor am I pricked forward by my own desires only, but by his invitations; nor was it my motion, but his own, which first put me upon this design of travelling to him. Nor shall you ever persuade me to desist in this enterprise, unless you can tell me from his own mouth that he will do no good unto a sinner (as I confess myself to be); but I will continue to pray without ceasing, and to labour perpetually that I may be righteous like to himself, and so be accepted with him. I am not so foolish, indeed, as to imagine that he will receive me to himself at Jerusalem if I become no better than I am; but I study by his grace (which I know he is not wont to deny) to be made so conformable to his desires, that he will not think me unworthy to be there entertained by him.

And now if any old friend or acquaintance should chance to cross your way, and, pitying that poor and desolate condition wherein you seem to be, should in civility invite you home to him, and pray you to accept of the kindness of their country; or if he should promise you some great pleasures and rare divertisements to the flesh, which are far more eligible, in his opinion, than such a miserable pilgrim's life as he sees you lead; turn a deaf ear to him, and do not go along with him. Nay, if he only stop you in your journey by vain, frivolous,

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and impertinent discourses, which, you think, detain you too long from accomplishing your intentions, break loose from him as soon as you fairly can, and say only this to him, Sir, I would fain be at Jerusalem. And if he persist to trouble you, and follow you with his importunities to turn aside to his dwelling, or to let him have more of your company, invite him to go along with you, and tell him that then he shall enjoy as much as he pleases of it. And if to these temptations there should many others succeed, from the proffers of gifts, honours, and preferments, which will incommode you, and be a clog to you in your journey; regard them not, but still bear in your mind the thoughts of what you shall have at Jerusalem. Which is not meant as if I thought the rich and the honourable could not get thither as well as we; but only to preserve you from the greedy humour of the world, who catch at all that presents itself, though they start out of their way to get it, and turn into an hundred by-paths to possess and augment it.

CHAP. XIX.

Of many other devices to discourage him in his journey; especially if he should chance to get a fall.

HERE the holy man rested himself again for a little space, to see if there were ought that his disciple had a mind to propose, who all this while had been in a profound stillness. But when he saw that he did nothing but ponder upon what he had spoken, and remained so fixed as if he had been chained to his mouth, and could not stir from thence; he went on in his discourse, which he clearly discerned the poor soul most greedily received. You look, said he, as if you were not at all dejected at what I have delivered; and perhaps you are the better satisfied, because you expect to be entertained with more pleasant news than hitherto hath saluted you. But I must deal sincerely with you, and let you know that many of the pleasures, in this way that you are to go, consist more in beating enemies than in having none; in victories and triumphs, rather than in not being exposed to dangerous conflicts. And therefore be contented to hear that all your enemies will fall into a rage, and be filled with madness, when they see their stratagems become so unsuccessful. And, that they may take

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some revenge for so shameful a disappointment, they will procure that you be exceedingly despised and scorned, as a very poor wretch and a silly creature. They will set the very boys and girls to laugh and hoot at you; or, which is worse, they will lay all the false things to your charge that they can devise, and throw in your teeth any old fault which you have committed; and not only brand you with very disgraceful names, but also calumniate you as a man of ill designs. But if you will be safe, I charge you not to heed these things at all; no, not if they go about to rob you, or proceed to beat you, or use you very despitefully, and persecute you with as much violence as malice can minister to their fury. Remember what I now say unto you, as you love your life, and contend not with them, strive not fiercely against them, nor spend so much as a fit of anger upon them. Content yourself as well as you can with the damage received, and pass on quietly, as though no hurt had been done; lest you involve yourself in worse dangers, and suffer a far greater harm than they have in their power to do you. Carry this only in your mind, that to be at Jerusalem in safety with Jesus is a thing that ought to be purchased with far harder usage than all this; and then you will not so much as repine at it, but be more comforted by your patience than you could have been by remaining free from such afflictions.

Let this also be added for your support, that if they see you are so hardy as not to be at all moved by these affronts, but rather well contented with such rude and dirty abuses, it will give as great discouragement to them as they hoped thereby to have given you. You will grow a very considerable person in their account, and they will stand in fear of you, as one that is like to hearten many others in this journey, from which they labour by so many ways that they may be deterred. Which must not be expounded as if their heart would not serve them to trouble you any longer, when they see you return all their blows upon themselves; for as long as their malice lasts they will not cease to be a vexation to you, and to labour to bring you into some new danger. Nay, it is likely they will, from all these disappointments, only learn to go to work more craftily, and lay all their heads together to contrive some in-

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sensible ways of effecting your ruin. But, as I said before, keep in your mind Jesus and Jerusalem, and they will give you security, and countermine all their plots to undo you. As, for instance, it is possible they will endeavour to sow some differences between you and your fellow-travellers, when you meet with any to bear you company. They will study to work in you an ill opinion, and to make you shy of each other; nay, to cast such bones of contention among you, that you shall grow passionate, fall out by the way, and break company: of which separation they will be the more desirous, because they know it is so profitable for you in your travels to have the benefit of good companions. Now if in this case you do but look upon Jesus, though the fire were already kindled, it would be instantly extinguished. And if Jerusalem do but come into your mind, if you do but cast a glance upon that sweet and quiet place, it will presently make a calm in your soul, which cannot think it likely you should come thither but in the paths of peace and love. As much as in you lieth, therefore, live peaceable with all men, and much more with your brethren and companions. And as one of the eldest guides that ever travelled this way hath left us directions, let it be ever a principal part of your care *to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*[b].

I hope that what I now say, together with that disposition which brought you hither to me, will render one caution (which else should have been here interposed) as unnecessary to you as it is needful in itself; which is, that you enter not into hot disputes and sharp contentions with any man, no, not about the opinions in which they pretend religion is concerned. But yet let me pass an observation or two upon those contests which seem to exercise so much of some men's zeal, and tell you, that I do not remember I have been acquainted with any man who was in love with controversies that much minded the way of Jerusalem, or studied to be so able to do the will of God as to confute and silence the adversaries that he opposed. This wrangling piece of learning is always wont to leave the most necessary truths, that it may pursue those which are unprofitable and good for nothing: nay, it is observed by wise men to

[b] [Ephes. iv. 3.]

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be generally accompanied with this base quality, that it cannot exercise the understanding without provoking the passions, nor speak of moderation itself without distemper, nor treat of peace and quietness without putting the soul into disorder. And therefore I could never discern that such disputers have any great faculty of descrying the truth about which they contend, but make that a matter of great difficulty and perplexity which the peaceable people, and they who are free from passion and prejudice, do easily discover. And here I shall not stick to refresh your mind a little with the pleasure of a story or parable which I have somewhere met withal out of Anselm, a man of no mean esteem in the times wherein he lived. There were two men, saith he, who, a little before the sun was up, fell into a very earnest debate concerning that part of the heavens wherein that glorious body was to arise that day. In this controversy they suffered themselves to be so far engaged, that at last they fell together by the ears, and ceased not their buffetings till they had beaten out each other's eyes; and so it came to pass that when, a little after, the sun did show his face, there was neither of these doughty champions that could discern one jot a thing so clear as the prince of lights, which every child saw beside themselves. It would be too great a disparagement to your understanding, if I should spend a moment in teaching you to apply it to our present purpose. It is sufficient to add, that though zeal for religion be not only commendable, but required of us, yet we must take great heed lest we strive so hotly and passionately for every opinion which we have conceived, that we quite lose our faculty of discovering either that or any thing else which is truly good. I may well say any thing else; for these controversies in religion, I have heard some wise men observe, do much hinder the advancement of other sciences, and the increase of good knowledge in the world. And therefore a great restorer of learning among ourselves was wont to say that he was like the miller near one of our famous universities, who used to pray for peace among the willows; for while the wind blew, and the windmills wrought, the watermill was less customed. And just so it is with these disputes: while they are high, and set men's wits in agitation, they draw away their thoughts from other profitable studies, and hinder their minds from such noble inquiries as would do

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a great service to mankind. Pray therefore for the peace of those that travel to Jerusalem; and do you seek it and pursue it by all means possible. Or, *if any be contentious, and obey not the truth, mark such persons, and avoid them.*

And, truly, there are so many enemies, as you have heard, to exercise our zeal, that we have not need to create more, and to seek for enemies among ourselves. They are so combined and confederate for our mischief and undoing, that it stands us in hand to unite our forces also for our mutual defence, and not to give them that advantage which they greedily gape for, and will certainly have by our sad divisions. So great is their subtlety, and so intent they are to make the utmost use of it, that if we have any wit, it had need be joined to obviate their designs, and not employed to make wide breaches, at which, without much difficulty, they may easily enter and destroy us. For, besides all the ways of deceiving us that have been already related, I must not forget to remember you of a condition into which you may fall, of which they will not fail to serve themselves as much as they are able. It is possible, I mean, that some way or other a fit of sickness may surprise you in your journey; or it may so happen that such a great want may be your portion, that no man will offer you any help, or regard your cries when you beg for relief. At this season your enemies will gather about you, and, as if they meant at once to swallow you up, they will put strange fancies into your head, and abuse your mind with such black and melancholy thoughts as may prove no small affliction to you. They will insult over you, and tell you that your folly and presumption in undertaking this tedious journey hath reduced you to so great extremities: or that some heinous sin, for which you have not yet been humbled, is the cause of this sad condition: or that you are one whom Jesus hates, which hath made him to abandon you to these straits to chastise your confidence: or that he loves you so little as not to care whether anybody mind you: or, at least, that you have so ill-deserved of mankind, that none of them regards you, or hath any solicitude for your welfare. And all these tales they will tell over and over again in your ears to feed your melancholy and disquiet of spirit; to make you murmur and fall into discontent;

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to breed in you an ill opinion of your Jesus, or to provoke you to anger and displeasure against your brethren; and, if it be possible, to work you into such uncharitable thoughts of them that you should never love them any more. But now it will concern you very much to stop your ears to all these lamentable stories, and to make as if you heard them not at all. You must say over your old lesson as oft as they repeat these suggestions, and whisper to yourself these words, I am nought, I deserve these miseries; it is not strange that I am sick or poor, but that I am no worse. And then, if you please, you may defy all these enemies, and let them know that you do not so much as desire the removal of these burdens, nor care for any thing in the world but only for the love of Jesus, and to be with him in peace at Jerusalem. Tell them you cannot believe that he hates a man who is possessed with this desire; but, howsoever it be, that you are resolved to try him by going on and persevering perpetually in it.

But then if it should happen that any of these assaults which I have named should prove so strong as not only to shake you, but also to make you stumble, yea, to throw you down, and to give you such a fall, that thereby some hurt is done you; or suppose that you should chance to step aside, and to divert a little out of the direct path which leads to Jerusalem; you must know that they will make a foul stir about it, and accuse you heavily for having done that which they laboured with all their power to make you do. I cannot tell you how you will look upon yourself in such a case if you should slide into it; but if you will follow my advice, I would not have you to esteem it so great and horrid a matter as they will make it, nor suffer yourself to be affrighted and astonished at it. All that any wise man would bid you do in such a condition is no more but this: that as soon as you observe your fall, and are come to yourself again, you get up presently, return into the old path, and use such remedies and medicines as every good body prescribes in such cases. Consider seriously by what means you were drawn aside, humble yourself at the feet of God; be afflicted, mourn and weep so far that the smart you suffer may keep you hereafter from the sin; strengthen your resolution; fortify yourself in those weak places where you

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are liable to surprise; be more watchful for the future, and more instant in prayer for the aids of divine grace. But when this is done, be sure you do not lie along upon the ground, crying and bewailing your misfortune, nor stand amazed in your error, complaining that you have been so miserably misled: for I am certain this will do you more harm than good, and give your enemies such advantage against you, that they will double their laughter at your folly; first for your fall, and then for your lying along or standing still after you was cast down. And, truly, I am of the opinion that your fall will not do them so much service as your lying still; and that they will not clap their hands so much to see you down as to see that you have no heart to rise, but go about to bury yourself in sorrow. If you would deject them and spoil their mirth, lift up yourself from the earth; and when you are upon your legs again, remember for what end they are bestowed upon you. Proceed forward, I mean, in your journey as fast as you can, and do not think it is to any purpose to stand looking into your wounds, and weeping into your sores. For besides that all that time you make no progress in your way, the wounds themselves also are made more angry, and you hinder the speediness of the cure. Provide therefore that they be instantly bound up, that the parts may close and unite together, that your strength may return, and your journey may be continued with as much courage and alacrity as it was begun. But immoderate grief, I assure you, will never suffer this; which will rather keep the wounds open, make your weakness greater, and cause the stop which hath been occasioned by your fall to last longer. I know your enemies will be always casting this miscarriage in your teeth, and be calling upon you to remember the place where they trip up your heels; but whatsoever they say, do not think yourself obliged to be continually turning your head that way, nor to be ever looking back upon your lapse and your pain. For they intend nothing else but to detain you in your course; and if they cannot freeze your blood, and make you stand stock still in a cold amazement, yet they hope hereby to dispirit your soul, and render you so dull, lumpish, and unfit for travel, that you shall move but a very slow pace in the way to Jerusalem. Be not ignorant therefore, I beseech you, of these devices, but take

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heed lest they make as great advantage of your sorrow as they could of your sin. So you be drowned and swallowed up, they care not whether it be by overmuch pleasure or by overmuch grief. They can serve themselves of your spiritual trouble and affliction of mind, as well as of your carnal delights and bodily enjoyments. They can make use of either to draw you from God; or, at least, if by the one they draw you away from him, they will labour by the other to keep you from returning back unto him.

Nay, I will tell you a fetch they have beyond this. When they have immersed you as deep as they can in sorrow, if they perceive you are aware of their design, and that you resolve not to sink any further, nor to be overwhelmed with it, then will they make that sorrow, which you have already felt, to be the instrument of plunging you into a new gulf, of which you did not so much as dream. They will take that very part upon them which you yourself should have acted before, and tell you that it was very ill-done to spend so much of your precious time in unprofitable grief: they will call you fool for your labour in afflicting your soul so long: they will persuade you it was a new sin to waste those hours in bewailing your offences, which should have been employed in amending of them. And therefore it is but necessary that I warn you again to be beforehand with them, and to secure this weapon for your own use. Keep it, I say, in your own power, lest, if they wrest it from you, it serve them in due season to wound you withal. Let your soul know from yourself that it is not fit to stand wringing your hands when you should be using them in your work; and do not stay to hear this from your enemy's mouth. Do not let them have the contentment to see you cast down so immoderately by your own means, that, if you rise, it may be only to fall again by their's. But put them to as great an affliction, by the discovery of their practices, as they would have made you endure by the success of them. Let them know that your error shall only make you take the greater heed, that you mean to go the faster by your fall, and to recompense your remissness with an higher zeal: but as for affliction and sorrow, that you will reserve yourself for them till a time when they shall be more profitable than now, that

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you have a mind to be doing better than ever. Tell them that you do not intend to engage religion against itself, nor make it guilty of being an hinderance to its own proper business. Give them to understand, that since you have done yourself so much mischief already, you will take care there be no addition to it by the means of the pious pretences of deep humiliations. Remember them effectually of the old observation which may serve to quash them in the midst of their greatest triumphs over you, viz. that those things which, for the time that is past, are worst of all, may prove, for the time to come, to be the best. We take advice of the future of those things which are gone by us. Good counsels in our after actions owe not a little to the miscarriages of former days. Our follies do teach us wisdom, and by lapses we learn to go more steadily.

And if they continue still to insult and to make ado about this business, give not the least regard to them; but call to your soul continually, and cry, On, on, my soul, stand not to hearken to what they say, look not back again, get thee forward as fast as thou canst: and instead of losing more time by these dejections of spirit, let us study by our courage to regain that which we have already lost. Nay, I would have you to proceed in your course just as if nothing at all had happened, keeping Jesus in your mind, and a vehement renewed desire and endeavour to continue in his favour; which he is never wont to deny those whose hearts are sincerely bent to please him.

And yet it may happen after all this, that you may meet with a worse use that they will make of your lapses. They may take occasion from thence to persuade you to be well contented with such miscarriages, and not to trouble yourself to amend such faults as have no remedy. Their endeavours will not be wanting to possess you with an opinion, which hath infected too many minds; that you cannot imitate Jesus, but have undertaken an impossible task which you will never be able to perform. This they may represent with a great deal of artifice, and many fair colours; saying, Alas, poor soul! in what a vain and idle labour hast thou engaged thyself! what meanest thou thus to strain thy wings in aspiring to that which no creature on earth can reach? Dost thou think to be like the

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Son of God? To wish to be so good is the highest perfection of human weakness: but to go about it is only to make a more large discovery of that natural frailty. It is a pattern too illustrious for thee to look upon, much more to follow. It belongs not to mere men to be such great undertakers. Thou mayest as well think to work miracles, as design to imitate his virtues. It lies not within the compass of flesh and blood to become so spiritual and divine. And if thou hadst not already forgotten thy falls, thou couldst not dream of raising thyself to so high a pitch. Can any heart put up such affronts with patience as thou meetest withal? Who can endure such abstinence, or exercise such charity, or practise such meekness as thou seest in Jesus? Sit down, vain man, and comfort thyself in this, that he hath done so worthily. It is enough to praise and extol such perfections; but it is too much to arrive at them. There is no man in his wits would trouble himself about a business, though he apprehend his obligations never so great that press him to it; when he hath so good an excuse as this at hand, that it is not possible to be effected.

I cannot stay to tell you the long speeches that they will detain you withal in this argument. Only you may know that there is no theme more easy and plausible than this, wherein to dilate themselves: and therefore you may expect a world of specious reasons to induce you to believe that no man can obey the commands of Christ, or follow his great example. Which persuasion, if they can by any means instil into your soul, I must assure you beforehand that it will prove the most dangerous temptation that ever made an assault upon you. It will cut (as I may so speak) the very sinews of your spirit, and cramp your soul, so that you will never be able to travel to Jerusalem. This infusion will not only discourage you, but perfectly benumb you, and make you languish in a perpetual lethargy. The opinion of necessity doth not more quicken and excite us, than that of impossibility doth deaden and dispirit us in any undertaking. And therefore now, if ever, you must run as fast as you can to the extract which I gave you. You must take a good draught of those enlivening spirits which I commended, and are enclosed in that sentence which you must carry along with you. You must repeat it again and again

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I desire nothing but Jesus; nothing but Jesus. He hath filled my soul with a purpose to go to him. He hath inspired me with strong resolutions to follow after him. And sure he will not fail to be my help, my strength, and my salvation.

And here let me beseech you to consider diligently beforehand, that they are his own words to his disciples just before he left the world: *I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you*[m]: and how that one of those persons hath also told us, that *he left us an example that we should follow his steps*[n]. To what end, I pray you, did he give us that which we cannot take? What are we the better for the copy which he hath left, if it be such as we cannot transcribe? Did he intend to brave us, rather than instruct us by his actions? Were they meant to upbraid our imbecility, and not to inspire us with courage and strength? Instead of provoking our spirits, were they only designed to make our ambition despair? And when he should have awakened our diligence, did he only come to astonish us with wonders, and cast our souls into a stupifying admiration? These are base and lewd supposals, of which the ancient pilgrims did never so much as dream. They thought they saw in him what mortal men by the grace of God might hope to attain. They looked upon him as the advancer of human nature, not only in his own person, but also in all those who would undertake to follow him. They were encouraged and inflamed by beholding him to imitate his heavenly life; and by his grace have left us themselves as instances and examples of that excellent virtue which believers on Jesus may come unto. They imitated him so happily, that they themselves are become originals. They cry out aloud unto us, that we should be *followers of them, as they were of Christ*[o]. And must we now stand only gazing upon them, and spend our time in commending the piety of ancient days? Must we think that those were privileged ages which were attended with such a grace that doth not descend upon future successions? Did the favours of Heaven die with those great souls? Must we seek for Christians only under their ruins, and in their monuments? Must we adore their relics in books, and please ourselves in ideas and patterns of things which we can-

[m] John xiii. 15. [n] 1 Pet. iii. 21. [o] 1 Cor. xi. 1.

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not imitate? Is it enough that we live in a profound sleep, if it be but interrupted sometimes with pleasant visions? Do they speak only to the first-born children of Christ, when they say, *Brethren, be followers together of us, and mark them which walk so as you have us for an ensample* [p]? Was it the privilege of their birthright to be so good, and must we be contented to remain bad? Are we such puisnees that must expect no portion of divine grace, or think of being *followers of God as dear children of his* [q]? For the love of God, let us not think that his treasures are exhausted, or that he is weary of his first munificence. His arm is no shorter than it was, nor are his hands less open. He is still willing to dispense his largesses, and to make us know that they did not end with those ages. Let us rouse up ourselves therefore, and not lose the benefits of heaven by thinking we cannot have them. Let us not impute to it such an unkindness of giving us so high an example, that it might oblige us to an unprofitable trouble. These are the old subtleties of the serpent, which the heathen divines have detected as well as we. The philosophers themselves were haunted with these clamours, and the people rang this continually in their ears: It is impossible to follow such examples as you propose. But they set themselves stoutly against this sluggishness. They pursued men's souls that made these excuses, and ferreted them out of such pretences wherein they sought to burrow, and to make a sanctuary for their laziness. You imagine, saith one of them, that those things cannot be done, which you do not. You will needs have them far to surmount the nature of man, because you will not be at the pains to acquire them. How much better do I think of you than you do of yourselves! I honour you so far, that I am of the mind you can be so good, but only you will not apply yourselves unto it. For who is there that hath made a trial with all his heart, that failed in the attempt? Who hath buckled himself to the work, that was destitute of strength? To whom have not these things appeared more easy in the act than in the imagination? The very truth of the business is, that it is not because they are so difficult, that we dare not enter upon these things; but because we dare not enter upon them, therefore they are difficult. We affright ourselves with

[p] Phil. iii. 13. [q] Ephes. v. 1.

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imaginary hardships: and this fear magnifies objects, and infinitely multiplies every individual. Be but pleased resolutely to undertake the task, and you shall find it as sweet and easy as now it seems harsh and formidable. Do but think that all things yield to hard labour, and you have overcome the greatest difficulties by that one thought.

Do you hear, sir, what this person saith? Shall we not have as much courage as heathens? Is there not so much of God remaining among us as inspired them with such strong resolutions? It seems to me that he hath touched the right string, and did we not supinely neglect ourselves, and forget even the words of Jesus, we should conclude, that *to him that believeth all things are possible.* We hinder the proficiency of our souls in piety, just as men do the advancement of good learning. There are few that understand (as perhaps you have heard it observed) either the estate they possess, or their abilities to purchase more: but they think the one is greater, and the other less than indeed they are. So it comes to pass, that, overprizing what they have already acquired, they make no further search, nor think of a due progress: or, undervaluing the power that God hath given them, they expend their strength and force in things of lesser consequence, and make no experiment of those which are the highest and noblest improvement of their minds. They content themselves to read and pray, and confess their sins, and take these for the best attainments of Christians. These are the fatal pillars, beyond which they have no hopes to penetrate. Here they make a stand, when they should go on to all other actions of an holy life. They run round in a perpetual circle of these duties, when they should move forward to a complete imitation of their blessed Saviour. Rouse up yourself therefore, I beseech you, and do not despair by his assistance of following the great example which he and his holy ones have left us. As the opinion men have of their wealth is the cause of want, so the conceit of an incurable weakness is the cause that we do no better. They that are gone before us have not left us to sigh and mourn that we cannot go after them. They have not robbed us of all the glory of doing well. We in this present age, if we do but stir up the grace of God which is in us, need not degenerate from the

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brave examples of our predecessors. Let us but look upon them now, and in good time we may look upon ourselves. As their example will encourage and excite our souls at present; so hereafter we shall draw much spirit from our own. Having done so well at first, we shall blush not to do better afterward. And while we imitate others, we shall at least endeavour with all our might to excel ourselves.

I can see no hinderance that lies in our way but only our own laziness, together with this weak persuasion wherewith our enemies labour to possess us: that because the business is not presently done, it is not likely to be done at all. And yet, to say the truth, I think that our idleness is to bear the blame of this persuasion also; for otherwise we shall never entertain such unreasonable apprehensions. There are a great number of men that would do well, if they had but the courage to endure for a few days. They have eager motions, or rather furious passions, and if the business could be done in a moment, or in that fit, there would not be braver men than they. But they are not willing to carry on a design of any length: they cannot hold out to make a work and a labour of becoming good; and so their slothful humour makes them, after the first attempt, to give back, and to cry out, To be better than we are it is impossible. A long march after our Saviour is a bugbear that affrights them. A tedious war with their enemies quite dispirits them. They are loath to be at the pains of subduing many resistances, and undergoing a laborious and continued course of destroying their opposers. They would not be soldiers all their life, nor ever engaged in a combat with their adversaries. They see their sins; but they either seem so great that they imagine they cannot be vanquished, or at least they will not be at the trouble of it, if it cannot be done in an instant. After the first onset, which is commonly very violent, they are wont to cool and make a retreat if they meet with any difficulties. They would have all effected now, and nothing left to be done to-morrow. They do not care for overcoming their enemies, but they had rather end the war with them; or if they must fight, it shall be but one battle. They would not be at the trouble of getting the better of any opposition; but they wish there were none, or that it were

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soon removed. They love the peace which will follow the victory, but they have no list to obtain it by a prolonged war. They would have their adversaries yield without many blows, and are content to engage but once for all against them. In this encounter you would not think there were to be found any souls that are more courageous. They are all on fire, and you would take them to be more than men. But it is their idleness and sloth that makes them thus active. It is their cowardice, and not their valour, that puts them into such a fury. It is because they would have no more to do, but only to enjoy their ease and take their repose. They had rather have nothing at all to do; but if they must employ their arms, they desire instantly to lay them aside again. You mistake them if you think they have a mind so much as to conquer, and triumph, and reign; all they desire is only to live and be in quiet. But if they must needs overcome, and they cannot otherwise have their wishes, they would do it presently, and by once taking pains, ever after have leave to play. Do not therefore deceive yourself, nor take a measure either of their courage or of the success by one impression upon your enemies. *You have need of patience,* (if you will be a follower of Jesus,) *that after you have done the will of God, you may inherit his promises*[r]. This is a virtue which is absolutely necessary in all great enterprises, but in none more than in this noble undertaking which you have in hand. If this be wanting, you must needs stay short of Jerusalem; but if you be armed with it, you need not despair of executing the pleasure of Jesus, and having the favour of seeing him there. *Let it but have its perfect work, and then you will be perfect, entire, and wanting nothing*[s]. By this the first pilgrim which I told you of came happily to his journey's end; for, *after Abraham had patiently endured, he obtained the promise*[t]. And if you inquire of all that succeeded, you will hear this language from every one of them, *Be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises*[u]. *Wherefore being encompassed with a cloud of witnesses,* and having on every side so many glorious examples, *run with patience the race set before you, looking* (espe-

[r] Heb. x. 36. [s] Jam. i. 4. [t] Heb. vi. 15.
[u] Ver. 12.

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cially) *unto Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith; who for the joy set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest you be wearied and faint in your mind*[x].

CHAP. XX.

How they will endeavour to puff him up with a spiritual pride. A description of one of our conceited believers, and also of a certain artificial religion which deceives many.

And now if they see that your will to him is so strongly set, and your heart touched so powerfully with his love, that neither by poverty nor sickness, by fancies nor fears, by persuasion nor violence, no, nor by sins neither, can it be hindered from going to him; they will grow extremely angry, and you may expect the very last assault of an enraged enemy, which commonly is worse than all the rest. Nothing can more provoke their spirits than to find that all they say is slighted and disregarded. There are no words you can speak of them that they esteem so reviling, as the scorn you put upon them by not hearkening to any of their words to you. It will incense them to take a sudden revenge, when they see you so obstinately resolved as to force your way through the midst of all the difficulties wherewith they surround you. This will necessitate them to invent a new method to surprise you, and to lay their trains in a way quite different from the preceding; which, though they may seem not hard to discover, yet have more of malice, if not of craft, than any other. For now it is possible they will feign a compliance with you, and make as if they neither could nor had a mind any longer to resist you. They will commend your constancy, and praise your resolute mind, and endeavour to make you believe that they are so sensible of it that they will forbear to trouble you. Nay, to such a complaisance will they form themselves, that you shall hear no more of the badness and difficulty of the way

[x] Heb. xii. 1, 2, 3.

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wherein you are; but they will say it is excellent, easy, and void of all dangers, which are now disheartened from presenting themselves to a mind that is only resolved to overcome them. By this means they will secretly labour to cause a very good opinion of yourself to steal into your mind, and study to blow you up into an empty conceit of your own worth and sufficiency. They will bring before you all the good deeds that you have done, and display your victories before your eyes, and let you know what a gallant person you are accounted. They will tell you how all men admire you; that the whole world must needs love you, and have you in great esteem for your piety; yea, even venerate the sanctity of your conversation. They will not spare to say that you have shown such love to Jesus as none can equal, and especially that your courage and valour is so eminent that it is above their praises. And all this with a great deal more they will suggest unto you, only to breed in you as lofty an esteem of your piety as they persuade you others must needs have of it; and to puff you up with such a vain joy, that you may please yourself in yourself, and forget to go forward to Jerusalem. But if you tender at all your own welfare, and would not miscarry after you have done so worthily, hold all this for an illusion and a dangerous piece of flattery. Look upon it as a deadly poison under the taste of honey, and so throw it away, saying, I will have none of it; I AM NOUGHT, I HAVE NOUGHT; do not think to please me with this dissembled sweetness, for that which I desire is nothing short of the PEACE which is promised to me at Jerusalem.

And here I should have entered a serious caution against spiritual pride, and a vain conceit of your own abilities, with which most of the world is infected; but that is included already in the general advice that I have given you: and besides I see you are so humble as to become a learner. It may seem indeed a thing worthy of little or no praise for those who are ignorant to come to be instructed; but there are few, I assure you, of our contentious Christians, though never so silly, who are yet arrived at this perfection. They think themselves fit not only to dispute with their minister, but to be his teachers. They are his masters rather than his scholars: and

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they do not only call him in question, but boldly deliver their opinion of him. If they had so much modesty and sense of Christian duty left as to bring their doubts unto him about what he says, it could not but be esteemed a commendable care of their souls. But alas! they are grown to that degree of insolence, and are so monstrously arrogant, that they have possessed themselves of the chair, and sit as judges of his sermons. What else means the rebukes which they meet withal, the hasty censures which are passed upon them, and the magisterial sentence which is instantly pronounced with such a peremptoriness, as if there lay no appeal from the bar of their understanding? It hath been my hard hap to converse with many of them, and among the rest I fell into the company of one the other day, who spake of his guide with such a scorn, and condemned his sermons with so much confidence, and laughed so loudly at his ignorance, and likewise cavilled so impertinently at his expressions, when he had nothing to say against the sense of what he had spoken; that a well-disposed man (though a little fierce) said, he had some doubt whether the devil did not appear unto us, to try if he could infect us with the leprosy of his pride and passion. And indeed I thought that I never saw those things more evident in any man, except it was in another of the same sort, who came to cheat us (as a neighbour of mine said) in the shape of an angel of light. This person, after a great many godly expressions, whereby it is like he deceived himself into an opinion of his saintship, fell into a kind of Christian compassion, and seemed to have his bowels yearning over his teacher, saying, Alas poor man! my soul is grieved for him: he is so weak and unqualified for the work he hath undertaken. He is utterly void of the Spirit, and understands not the workings of it in the hearts of God's people. I can never think of him but it pities me to see how much he is in the dark; a stranger to the power of godliness, and the mysteries of the covenant of grace. Poor soul! who puts us upon doing, (and they say is careful of that himself,) but knows not what it is to believe. Is it not a great happiness, Sir, that we have the teachings of the Spirit; and that the veil is taken from our eyes which still hangs before the men of the world? Hath not Christ done much for us, who hath made us wiser than our teachers?—

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I could not for my heart but here interrupt him, (knowing that the person whom he thus undervalued was a true lover of our Saviour, and excellently skilled in his religion,) or else I think we should have heard as much in his own praise as we had in the other's discommendation. But the truth is, I never heard any thing so fulsome from the mouth of man; and found myself far more impatient of such filthy stuff, than he could be of the sermons at which he expressed so great dislike. And, to say nothing at all of the man, I cannot but think that this spirit is the very first-born of the devil, the eldest of all the daughters of pride, the prince of darkness in the garments of light, the dregs of Christian pharisaism which now as much despises Christ's ministers as the Jewish did Christ and his apostles. God, I hope, will never suffer you to suck in this poison of the serpent, nor lick up this vomit of the old scribes and Pharisees. I discern, methinks, that you are as far from it as they were from the kingdom of heaven; or else I should bestow more time upon you to season you against this leaven, which will sour the whole lump of your religion, and render it as offensive to God as itself is to all sober Christians. But I need not have said so much: I must suppose you as empty of all humanity as this disposition is of Christianity, as far from reason as it is from the Spirit of God, or else hope that this spiritual pride, this devout devil, shall never possess you. For what is it but madness, (even in the opinion of those men,) for one that was never bred in the mysteries of that profession, to come into an apothecary's shop, and there to condemn all his drugs and medicines for rotten and corrupt, to spit upon his compositions, and offer to throw them all out of doors, as fit to be mingled with the dirt? And yet there is not more sense in the humour of those persons that use the sermons they hear after that fashion: which evidently proves that they deserve not the name of sober, much less of wise and understanding Christians. Though the matter of such discourses have been long considered, and duly weighed, and diligently composed out of the word of God; yet these men, who do not ponder them so many minutes as their instructors do days, and have no more skill in these matters than in their neighbours' trades, which they never professed, reject them at first hearing, bespatter them with their ignorant censures, and (as if they were

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in a frantic fit) cast them out, as they would fain do their authors, like unsavoury salt, that is good for nothing but to be trodden under feet.

It will seem a wonder perhaps unto you, that such men as these should esteem themselves religious. How is it possible, will you be ready to say, that such a notorious want of modesty and humility of spirit should not make them suspect their want of true Christianity? I know indeed that nothing is more confident than ignorant heat; but I marvel that in their cool moods they do not accuse themselves at least of rashness and inconsiderate zeal. And truly I should stand amazed at it too, did I not know that there is such a fair counterfeit of religion in the world, that not only deceives others, but those also in whom it is. You behold every day many images, which have all the outward parts and proportions of men to whose similitude they are exactly formed. And perhaps you have heard of a statue that walked and that spoke also, wherein the artist endeavoured to express the motions of inward life. Which may serve as a resemblance to you of such an artificial religion, that not only the outside and the garb of piety is represented by it, but there is an imitation also of the inward motions of the soul in such affections of fear, and love, and joy, as are in truly religious hearts. Do not think it strange, nor wonder at this which I now tell you, for it is a very great truth which I thought not safe to conceal from you. And if you will have so much patience, I will discover to you the trick of it, and show you by what mechanical powers this lifeless engine (for it is no better) is stirred and acted in the ways of God.

You know the force that colours, and sounds, and other such material objects have upon our senses; and how they excite a great many motions in our animal spirits, without asking our leave, or staying for our consent. You cannot be ignorant neither that these motions are in the soul itself, which hath resentments according to the quality of those objects that it is impressed withal. And again, you cannot but perceive by my discourse with you, that the figures and images of things may be raised in your fancy by that means, as well as con-

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veyed by the doors of sense. Suppose then that the beauty and loveliness of Christ were described to a company of men in very fresh colours and fair lineaments: that he was painted before their imagination by some sweet-toned orator as white and ruddy, the chiefest of ten thousand: that this speech of him should be trimmed with nothing but gems and precious stones, rays and glories, odours and perfumes, crowns and diadems, wherewith he saith this Prince of glory, and wooer of souls is perpetually adorned. And then he should tell them that his heart stands open to them, that he intends to lay them in his very bosom, that he would fain embrace them in his arms, and will wash them in his blood, make them amiable and fair as well as himself, put upon them the robes of his righteousness, cover them with his glorious garments to hide all their deformities, and so present them to God without spot or blemish, that they may reign as so many kings with him for ever. Suppose, I say, that such a discourse were made with much affection, (and I believe you have sometimes heard the like,) would it not as agreeably move the imagination of a fleshly man, and be as apt to touch his heart with an inclination to this beautiful person, as a lovely face presented before the eyes doth give him a pleasure, and stirs up a passion in him toward it? Truly I nothing doubt but this picture of Christ might impress such a conceit of him in the fancy, as might excite admiration, desire, love, delight, and such other passions as shall be the imitation of those that are in pious souls who are in love with the virtues and spirit of our Saviour. He may not at all suspect but that he bears an affection to the Lord Jesus, and in great zeal anathematize and curse all those who are not just affected like himself. He will condemn as much as yourself all those dull and gross souls who are employed in setting the postures of the face, and amusing the world with countenances. He laughs at them who are busied in ordering the motions of the head, and bending the eyes to devotion. He is far above these actions of the body; and feeling his soul in a devout posture, and touched with religious passions, he knows no reason why he should not think himself to be worthy to wear the name of devout and religious.

And when these apprehensions and emotions (as we call

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them) are once begotten, it is no hard matter to maintain and breed them up to a greater growth. They may be fed perpetually with new objects, that yield a fresh delight. The description of Jerusalem may be made so full of pleasure, that an earthly man may be ravished therewith. And he hearing also certain signs and marks given of those who are said to have an interest in Christ, and shall be heirs of Jerusalem, it is very easy to conceive how such a man may set himself a work, first to imprint his fancy with such characters, and then to form his passions to some expression and apish imitation of them. Fancy, you know, hath a great command over all the passions; and being acquainted very well with the way to them, and the manner of awakening them, can call them forth upon this occasion as easily as upon any other. It can make them as busy when these divine matters present themselves, as when sensible objects knock at our doors, and demand to be admitted to our converse. There are no names of dearness which men of this stamp cannot bestow upon Jesus. They can speak of him with an high pleasure, and pray in a pathetic style, and not without devout transport. They find a love to this kind of communion with him. They can rejoice to think of his fulness and sufficiency. They can be astonished at the freeness of his grace. Thy can mourn for their sins, and then call themselves blessed for so doing. Nay, more than this, they can excite the passion of gratitude in their hearts: and if they hear withal that they must be regenerate and born again, they can follow the fancy of that so long, till they think that they feel the throes and pangs of the new birth, a change wrought in their souls, and all the rest, in the method and order wherein they had it described to them. Thy will first be cast down in great humiliations. Thy will complain of the naughtiness of their hearts, and the corruptions of their natures. They will loathe and abhor themselves as abominable creatures. They will disclaim all their own righteousness and strength, and think of bringing their hearts to the promise. And if they have heard any better language to express this work, they will bring themselves to an imitation of all that is contained in that also. Thy will labour to detest their former courses, and to make a choice of a new life. Thy will strain themselves to spit upon their sins, and to cast a smile upon the ways of virtue. They

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will at least offer themselves to Christ to be formed anew, and pray him to make them such as he pleases.

Thus is one of the religious puppets of the world produced. This is the beginning and progress of that piece of work, which a good man now at Jerusalem was wont to call a mechanical religion. And if you doubt at all whether or no there be such an artificial device as this, which passes for piety, do but call to mind one thing which you cannot but know, if you have been a person of any observation, and you shall be convinced of it. There arises, you see, very often new modes and fashions of religion among us. The old ways are much decried, and the last invention is voted to be altogether divine. Now, if one of these persons whom I have spoken of shall chance to fall into the acquaintance of a sect that is much different from the present, which he hath long followed, you shall see him easily shift his form, and speedily turn into another shape. He can soon quit the way wherein he was, and become religious after the manner of this novel platform. All the old signs and marks of regeneration shall stand for nothing, and now he distinguishes himself from the men of the world by other characters: which is an evident token that he is moved by the power of imagination, and as external objects shall strongly impress themselves, that he hath no internal life, but is carried by the impulse of foreign things, which change his motions at their pleasure. He seems to himself to be alive, and to be no less than divinely acted; but, alas! he is only a walking ghost; as appears in this too plainly, that, like those images of living bodies, he can alter himself so quickly, and be moulded into another figure. Such a shadow of a Christian, perhaps, was he that hath been the occasion of all this discourse: whom we are not to think to have an inward life because of the noise and bustle that he made, and the confidence wherewith he spake; for these do but still render him more like those ghosts, who have a greater boldness and cause many times more stir than they that are really alive.

That we may be sure therefore that you are a living man, you must expose yourself to our touch, and demonstrate it to the sense of feeling. You must say, as our Saviour did when

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his disciples took him for an apparition, *Come near and handle me*, and you shall see that I do not cheat you. Let those that approach you perceive that Christ liveth in you, and *show forth your works out of a good conversation, and that in meekness of wisdom.* I mean, in plain words, that it must appear to the world that you are a substantial Christian, by all the acts of an holy life. You must make them sensible of your exact justice, your unfeigned charity, your self-denial, your patience, your peaceableness, and above all, your meekness, humility, and modesty of spirit: that, if they had a mind, they may not have the face to say, you have but the semblance and apish imitation of piety. And, to say the truth, there is nothing will certainly evince it to yourself, but only this, that you feel in your heart a constant, powerful, and prevailing inclination to all good works. *Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit*[y]. *If we know that he is righteous, we know that every one that doth righteousness is born of him. Let no man deceive you; he that doth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous*[z]. *He that committeth sin is of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother*[a]. And indeed, by this one mark last named, you shall detect the artifice of those seeming people: who, notwithstanding all their fair speeches whereby they deceive the hearts of the simple, are never found to have a true and hearty love to those that follow not the sect which they have embraced. It is a great while ago since a very eminent person told the world that he noted but two small wants in that sort of men, viz. of knowledge and of love. He might have bated them one of the two, and yet their condition had been bad enough: though, if he had lived till now, he would have seen their poverty increased, and that they want humility as much as either of the other. They are indeed but small wants in their account, (especially the two last of the three,) and they can be very well content without them, if God will be so too. They esteem themselves rich enough in other

[y] 1 John iv. 13. [z] ii. 19. [a] iii. 8, 9, &c.

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invisible treasures; nay, they have one jewel of such inestimable value, (viz. their *faith*,) that it will compensate for a thousand wants that are no greater than these. But either I have lost all my labour, or else I have made you sensible that there is nothing more imports you than to see that you be not deficient in these two, *charity* and *humility*. I may safely, I suppose, refer you to your own memory for to be satisfied in their necessity; and so only say this concerning the former of them: that all your *faith* is worth nothing which worketh not by *love*; and that he is a liar who saith he loveth God, and loveth not his brother also.

That you may secure yourself therefore the better from this and all other illusions, what other counsel should I give you than to ponder that sentence much which I wished you to carry along with you, and to let your thoughts run as little as may be upon any other thing save Jesus only and Jerusalem? Draw your mind from the things which you see in this outward world, and make it to retire within unto yourself; that there you may talk with Jesus, and behold Jerusalem, and see that glory where he is: which when you have practised a competent time, as every thing will be unwelcome and painful to you which is not related to them, so you will entertain every thing as very acceptable which brings you into their familiarity. Not as if I would have you to neglect any business to which you are obliged in the world; for whatsoever it be which either necessity or charity requires, whether it be for yourself, friends, or Christian brethren, I must charge you to apply yourself to the doing of it with all care and exactness. Jesus is not out of your eye (as I shall tell you further) when you are so employed; for this is the thing by which he was known above all other, that *he went about doing good*. But if it be a business of no necessity, or if it be one wherein your particular person is not concerned, and your neighbour challenges not your assistance, let it alone, and trouble not your thoughts about it. And if it offer itself to you, and press upon you, and would make you a meddler in other men's matters, (as most of our vain believers are,) tell it you have something else to do, and repeat still those words, I HAVE NOUGHT, AND NOUGHT DO I DESIRE BUT TO BE IN PEACE WITH JESUS AT JERUSALEM.

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CHAP. XXI.

Of the endeavours of his enemies to keep him from doing good to his brethren, under a pretence of love to God. And of the excellency of that brotherly charity.

And here it seems very seasonable to remember you of another common subtlety whereby your adversaries will study to deceive you, and put a great stop to your progress in the way you are about to enter: which is, to detain you in the amusements of contemplation, and to busy your head only with meditations and conferences with Jesus. They know that this will keep you too much at home, as well as any thing else, and that you will travel in your mind and thoughts only, but not with your whole man, to Jerusalem. And therefore they will labour to persuade you of this, at least, that there is not half so much piety can be exercised abroad as in your closet, and that the good we do our brethren is nothing comparable to the meditations we have of God and our Saviour, and the affections we express unto them. This will very much hinder your proficiency, and put a greater rub than you imagine in your way if you lend any belief unto it. It will keep you very much behind, under the pretence and colour of putting you forward; and it will depress and thrust you down below others while you seem to be mounting up on high, and soaring to a pitch far above them. For your enemies understand very well that God accounts all that as done to himself which is done to your brethren for his sake. He hath made over all those benefits to them which are owing to him, because he is in no need of them. They are become his receivers, and he hath devolved the right which he hath to our returns of love to him upon our brethren. Be not you ignorant of this then, but understand it as well as your enemies, that you never serve God better, nor so well neither, as when you are doing any service to your poor neighbours. You are bound, you think, to express such love to God as he hath expressed to you. Only you find that he is not capable to receive such effects of it as you experiment in yourself from his affections to you. But will you imagine now that he will lose the right he hath to your thankful

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retributions because he is in want of nothing? No such matter: he hath deputed those who are in need to receive from us that which is due to him, and employ it to their own uses. He hath communicated (as I may say) all his claim to them, and bids them demand in his name that which we cannot give, much less forgive, to him. So that you exercise justice and charity both together when you do good to your neighbour; and there is a double charity in it also, one to him, and another to them. They have good done them upon his account, and he takes it so much as done to himself, that he acknowledges an obligation, and binds himself to pay us again.

Nay, let me tell you, that there is nothing in all the world can render you so divine and heavenly as to do much good. This puts us in the place of God to our poor brethren, to whom he sends relief and help by our hands. Is not this a very high honour? And is not that a very noble quality which so differences us from all others, that it makes us like to the Most High? The mechanical Christian will here find himself to be dead and void of God; it being nothing but a spirit of life, and that very divine too, which will carry us out of ourselves, and fill us with perpetual ardours of love to others, and instigate us to be doing of good to all. This is the very character of the Deity, for *God is love, and he that loveth dwelleth in God, and God in him.* And therefore if you covet to excel all others, study to be endued with the most *profitable gifts*, as the great apostle adviseth: and yet, saith he, *I show you a more excellent way*, and that is *charity*. For this causes us to make use of all those gifts for the benefit of mankind. This is the rarest way of excelling others, because it makes us excel ourselves, and likens us to God. The angels, you know, had the ambition of being like to God in power and majesty, aspiring, as is conceived, to the throne of the Most High. Our first parents were soon infected with the like vanity, and they rubbed their leprosy upon them, for they affected to resemble God in wisdom and knowledge. But by this means you know that both of them lost what they enjoyed, instead of adding more unto it. What must we do then who see their fall? must we be content not to be like to our Creator? Not so neither, but we must endeavour to imitate him in love and goodness, in which

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there is no danger. This admits of no excess, (as wise men observe,) but only of error. We cannot love too much, though we may be imprudent in the communications of it. Though angels and men suffered so much by the desire of other things in excess, yet in charity there can be none, nor shall either of them suffer any damage by it. And therefore it was that God sent his Son Jesus into the world, that by looking on him we may know how to become divine. All his acts of power were acts of love. All his miracles were mercies to men. He never employed his might but to do benefits: to teach us that they are truly great who are little in themselves (as he was) and great in charity; that they are endued with most power who can do most good; and that they are nearest to God, and most highly exalted, who are nearest to their neighbours, and most deeply humbled. You know that if a circle be made, and you draw lines from the circumference to the middle point or centre where they all meet, the further these lines are in any place one from the other, the further they are from the centre; and the nearer they come to that, the nearer also and the closer their approaches are to each other. This may be a resemblance, if you please, of our condition here in this world, where we are all in our way to God the centre of our rest, and travelling to Jerusalem, where we hope to meet in him. We are desirous now to draw as nigh to him as we can, and many fancy that their musings, meditations and prayers, are the chiefest, if not the only things that bring them near unto him. But as I have told you heretofore, so let me now repeat it again, that God and our brethren are so inseparable, that we cannot touch the one, but we must be joined to the other also. The further any of us is removed from his neighbour (as you see in that similitude) at the greater distance he is from God. He cannot go away from the former, but he goes away in the same proportions from the latter too. And the nearer and closer he is joined in the affection of charity to his neighbour, the nearer he is unto God, the more doth he approach to his excellencies, and to an union with him. If you will be a follower of God, then, as a dear child of his, *walk in love.* You cannot choose sure to do otherwise when you have so glorious a pattern before you. It is an honourable thing now, you see, to love, since God himself is become a lover. You may have imagined perhaps

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that some offices of charity are ignoble, and disparage a person of honour: as most men of condition think it below them to go into a poor man's house, to come near the stinking wounds and the dirty beds of the meaner sort: and there are very few who do not account it a sneeking quality to put up injuries, and pass by affronts. But you cannot be of this mind if you look upon God, who by loving us hath also taught us how honourable and glorious all these things are. They are not below us, since they are not below himself. There is no man so much our inferior, as we are all beneath him. And yet he condescended to them. He comes and dwells in this perishing flesh of ours. He despises not our poor cottages; he dresses our wounds; he takes care of our sores; he heals our sicknesses; he passes by our transgressions; yea, he prays us to be friends, and entreats us to be reconciled. And that is a thing which men think to be so poor and mean, that no great spirit can endure to submit unto it. To go to others who have offended us, and beseech them to lay aside their enmity, is thought to savour of baseness, and to be an argument of a low and cowardly mind. But God will give us leave to think so no longer. He hath shown us that it is the effect of a most generous and noble disposition, and so far from being a blemish to us, that we should glory in it to be the first in making peace, and offering terms of reconciliation. Others may think to give proofs of their gallantry by standing in defiance to all those who will not submit themselves, and lie at their feet; yea, by trampling on them who shall in the least offend them: but God teaches us by his own example that there is no greater height of mind, than in humility and meekness to condescend to others, yea, to lay ourselves at their feet, and beg of them, for the sake of the Lord of peace, that they will be the children of peace. This is to become the sons of the Most High, and heirs of the greatest glory.

And now let me ask you for what end would you shut up yourself in your closet, or make a cell of your house? Is it not that you may improve yourself in the knowledge of God? and do you not hope there to converse more with Heaven? you need not then be put to the trouble of this confinement, for I assure you nothing will so much promote your end as love of

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your neighbour. This will make you feel what God is, and give you the clearest and strongest sense of him. And the larger and wider your charity grows, the more able will you be to conceive the vastness of God's love, and the less doubt you will have of his universal good-will. It will dispose you also more than any thing else to believe the gospel, and will win your assent to those reports which seem most incredible. When you find in yourself such a great love to others, it will be easier for you to conclude that God might love us so much as to send his only Son into the world, and give him also to die for us sinners. And if there be any thing of greater force than other to bring you acquainted with the joy and peace of Jerusalem, and to make discoveries beforehand of it, this must be that happy spy. For they consist very much in the dear love and friendship which there is between all the inhabitants of that blessed place. But these things I will leave to your own thoughts, and only pray you to employ your mind in all your secret retirements so much in these meditations, that you may issue forth from thence very full of God, and as a man inspired to do much good. For this active devotion is that which God loves. He will impart more of his blessings to you, if you open your hands in doing benefits to others, than if you should lift them up all day in prayers to heaven. He refuses nothing to the stirring and diligent souls, whom love and good-will have set in motion. He delights to give to those who employ his grace. It is a pleasure to him to bless those who go forth to meet his favours, and do not expect them in their chambers. But we never imply his grace better than when we imitate the effusions of it upon us in our kindness and benignity to others. And we are never more like to meet his blessings, than when they are blessing of him for the good that we have brought unto them.

I know you will be ready to say hereafter, that you can design a great deal more than you doubt you shall ever do: that the idea you have of this noble quality is very high, but you are afraid it is above your reach. And therefore I pray you beforehand that you would not trouble yourself with such thoughts, but only remember these two things: that when you have done all the good that ever you can, that will dispose you

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still to do more; and in the mean season you are to take care of this, to rejoice heartily that there are others in the world who can do more good than you. If we were once arrived at this noble disposition of rejoicing in the good of others, either in that which they enjoy, or that which they can do, we should be so far from wanting charity, that we should equal ourselves with the most excellent and blessed natures. As we should have no cause to complain that we are not in the same throne with princes, nor to envy the learning of those who sit in the chairs of wisdom; so we should not come behind the devotion of the greatest saints, nor be much inferior to the angels, who think it no small part of their happiness that they can rejoice in God, and in all the marks of his goodness wheresoever they can discern them. Are we less happy because our wit is not so strong, our revenues not so large, our station not so high, and so our power to oblige others not so great as those of many of our neighbours? No such thing, but we shall rather be the more happy, if in the midst of a low condition, and in a meaner rank, we can keep ourselves from the rust and canker of envy, which is wont to grow soonest in such places as are low and damp. He hath raised himself to a very high pitch, whose soul surmounts all discouragements, and rejoices in the universal good of mankind by whomsoever it is procured. Hereby we shall make the happiness of every person that is above us to be our own. For how is he more happy than I who gets a victory, if I triumph in it as much as himself? Wherein is he superior to me whose riches increase, if I be not only contented therewith, but much better pleased in his prosperous estate than I was before he enjoyed it? Nay, if it make me well to see him in health, and refresh my spirit to see him merry, and really render me better to behold his progress in wisdom and virtue; then I have the benefit of all these, and they become mine as much as his in whom they are. And can you contrive a better way than this to make your soul the resort of all pleasures; the very centre wherein the happiness of the whole world shall meet, the rendezvous (if you will give leave to that word) of all those joys which are scattered every where among God's creatures? It is not possible for you to do it: nor is there any delight so noble and sublime, so pure and refined as this, that with so much ease you may enjoy. It is the very extract

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of all other pleasures; it is the essence and spirit of them without the grosser parts, which are wont to detain half of the pleasure from us. Though other pleasures make more noise, yet this gives greater contentment. They make a louder sound, but the commendation of this is its silence and quiet. The world takes more notice of others, but the very secresy of this joy increases its sweetness, and vapours not out the purity thereof. Other enjoyments may be greater in bulk, but this is more in value. They are obtained at a greater charge, but this we enjoy at other men's cost. Those persons have the labour and sweat together with their delight, and we have the pure pleasure. They work not for themselves only, but they must do us some service thereby. We come in for a share of all their gettings, and want nothing which they have, but only the toil and the pains. And yet so innocent is this pleasure, that while we enjoy all that others do, we leave them all they had and take nothing away from them. As the bees suck an invisible sweetness, which robs the flowers of none of their beauties from whence they fetch it; so do we when we solace ourselves in other men's goods; which are not impaired by our relishes, nor made less by all the contentment we draw from them. Nay, we oblige them by this means, and pay them largely for all that we take. It will be an addition to their pleasures to know that others are pleased with them. It will be the best part of their satisfaction to understand that you cast not an evil eye upon their enjoyments. Their happiness would be imperfect, if you did not think yourself happy too. They will owe as much to you as to their own acquisitions, and you equal yourself to them by not envying their superiority.

But I think it is time to conclude this discourse concerning the good you are to do your brethren; and therefore I shall only admonish you of a thing which may be apt, if you have not considered it, to trouble you in your way to Jerusalem, and so pass to other matters. After you have done all the good you can, you must not think to have the pleasure of finding all these persons grateful on whom you have bestowed your favours. You must rejoice in your own virtue, without expecting that additional delight which reciprocal love would afford you. Such a good nature, I believe, as yours, will make

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you suppose that you have received a favour when one hath but done you justice, and therefore you will be infinitely sensible of any kindness, and think that it lays an everlasting obligation of gratitude upon you. But do not imagine that you shall meet with much of this ingenuity in the world: there are a far greater number of such a wicked disposition that they look even upon kindnesses as their due, and will render you no more thanks for them than men commonly do for justice, to which every body claims an equal right. Nay, you will meet with those who, when they are highly obliged, do love to avoid the persons that put those bonds upon them. They will not behave themselves so well as to take your kindnesses for their due, but carry it rather as if they had done them a sensible wrong. And I wish I could not say that there are such ill natures who cannot endure so much as to behold those who have been their benefactors, but shun them as if they were their deadly enemies. But you will find, I fear, too many of these wretches, who think, whensoever they see you, that you upbraid them with all the good they have received from you. When you did them benefits you laid chains upon them; and they think it no crime to hate him that hath made them his prisoners. They will heartily wish you were dead, that so they may be freed from their bonds, which will die and be buried in the same grave together with you: for they, measuring other men's natures by their own evil disposition, which inclines them to do good to none, unless it be with a design to make them slaves, they could wish never to see those persons who, they think, look upon themselves as their lords and masters by having thus engaged them. Their courtesies are mere traffic, and they always expect to gain more than they give: which makes them hate their benefactors, who look, they imagine, for payment also far greater than they have a will to make. Nay, they had rather do a courtesy to those who never did any thing for them than be officious to those persons who have so much obliged them: just like those wicked people who had rather make a present to others than pay what they owe to their creditors. Which, to say the truth, is no more than the necessary consequence of that cursed principle I named before, of trading with kindnesses, and putting them out to use, that they may improve into greater, to be rendered back to

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them. I know very well there is no vice more odious than this, or which lies under greater reproach even by ungrateful persons themselves; but yet, I assure you, it will be found that there is none more common. And the mischief of it is, that it is never so likely to grow in base natures as when they have been highly bound to you. The kinder you have been, the more ungrateful they are like to prove; like those who, having contracted a vast debt, and having a little to pay, run away with shame, and pay just nothing at all. You must do good, therefore, merely for the love you bear to itself; and though you desire no payment but only the pleasure of having it kindly resented, you must be content sometimes to lose that small return, and rest satisfied in what you have done, and in your pious disposition to do the same again.

CHAP. XXII.

That a pilgrim must sometimes recreate himself as well as other men. Of the pleasure of good company. What men are to be more particularly avoided. Of the festivals of the church: how useful they may be; and how much abused.

And now I think it is time to remember you, for the prevention of all mistakes, that there never was any pilgrim who could always be exercised in doing good to others, or in prayer and contemplation, but he was forced to attend sometimes to himself alone, and provide for the needs of his body by the use of meat and drink and sleep; wherein you must not think to be unlike them. Nay, there is a great need also, at certain seasons, of innocent recreations, which pilgrims must not be so morose as utterly to deny themselves; for in truth there are none so fit as they to enjoy them. And in all these things I would have you to use the best discretion that is in your power, avoiding, as you would the greatest danger that hath been mentioned, all foolish scrupulosity about them. Do not measure your drink, nor weigh your meat, nor confine your divertisements to a minute, but enjoy them freely as the best wisdom you have shall at that present direct you, resolving not to

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trouble yourself about any after accidents: for, though it is necessary that we take a care to spend our time well, and there is nothing of which we should be more frugal, yet it is not good to be over rigorous in exacting an account of our hours. We may run ourselves thereby to infinite scruples, and busy our thoughts about such endless niceties, that we may lose much time while we are thinking how to save it, and impoverish ourselves by studying to be miserable good husbands. Do not grudge therefore to these things a fair portion of your time, out of a fear that they will be too great an hinderance to you; for though they seem to stay you for a while, they do very much further you, and give you strength to walk more cheerfully for a long time after. Discreet stays and rests make speedy journeys. It is no turning out of your way, to divert yourself some time in a pleasant meadow. That is the nearest way to a place which brings you soonest thither; and, as the old saying is, soft and fair goes far.

And indeed it is impossible that all the hours of a man's life should be equally grave. The wings of the soul cannot be always stretched, and it is idle to think its vigour shall receive no abatements. Let it soar never so high, it will be forced to stoop again; and by sitting still and refreshing itself, be made more able for a new flight. Of this you must be well advised, or else you will never get to Jerusalem. It is the counsel of nature which must be followed, that all who work do take some rest. The continuance of labour depends upon moderation, and nature always threatens violence with an end. I grant that your desires may be ever pricking you forward, and that they may be loath to give you a moment's rest. But they will stimulate you, even till they gall you, and if you take not heed will make you rest of necessity, and not out of choice. The best courser that is may run himself off his legs. You may tire and jade yourself by over long journeys. And though your mind be of such a make, that if it were alone, and had nothing to carry along with it, possibly it might never be weary, but would run continually: yet while it is engaged in the company of this terrestrial body, it must sit still and ease itself, if it be but for the sake of its fellow-traveller. We are not yet divorced from sense, nor do we enjoy the liberty

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which we hope for at Jerusalem. We are far from the purity of simple beings, and whether we will or no, shall find ourselves to be mixed with matter which will not always move. It will be a slug, do what we can; and if we will not find it some refreshment, it will take some of itself, and more sometimes than we need to give it. It is better that it should be at our dispose than at its own. It will be content with less, if we do not deny it all. We shall find it more obedient, if we do not by our rigour provoke it to a plain rebellion. We shall use greater moderation, if by defrauding ourselves of all recreations we do not become so impatient as to play the gluttons, when we take the liberty to enjoy them. It is, no doubt, a true observation, that the ready way to make the minds of youth grow awry, is to lace them too hard, by denying them their just freedom. When you rob the appetite of its lawful and innocent delight, it hath such a desire to break this prison that it ofttimes furiously bursts forth into unlawful and forbidden pleasures: and therefore use a due care at least in your first setting out, that you run not with too great a violence. Do not make more haste than good speed, as you will be apt to do when you begin your journey. Young pilgrims are wont to be very forward, and to tie themselves to such long stages, that they grow weary, and turn aside to some more pleasing courses. And it is well if they divert not to such as are loose after too great strictness. They are very happy if they leave not off their travel by travelling too fast. The very best that we can expect is, that they sit down as men out of breath, and that they lose more time in recovering of it than they would have done in seasonable refreshment.

Nay, let me tell you, the oldest traveller upon the road will find that he hath great use of them, and cannot give so good an account of his time, unless he bestow a little of it upon them. Recreations are part of the needs of human life, and though a man be never so well provided, he will be liable to this want. The most vigorous minds will sometimes be weary and call for quiet and ease. The strongest eyes will at last grow weak and desire to shut themselves. The life of the greatest sages (as a wise man once told me) is not altogether serious. All their sayings are not sermons, nor is all they

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write either their last testament or the confession of their faith. And therefore study not how to live and use none, but rather to use none but those which are good and worthy of a man. Think not to be employed so as not to need them, but take care that under a pretence of need they do not become your employment. Order the matter so discreetly that they may be as profitable as they are delightful. See that they render you the hours back again which you have bestowed on them. For there is nothing more certain than that we may gain time by intermitting our labours, and rid the more ground by standing still a while.

And because the greatest part of a wise man's pleasure consists in good diverting company, let me here remember you to provide that it be carefully chosen, and that you do not lightly take men into your familiarity. Excellent men you are rather to be conversant withal than excellent books. You may learn more of them than all your study can teach you. You may at once give your soul a recreation, and your body a repast; you may divert yourself and others both together. He who asks and inquires of his company shall both receive much learning, and give much content; especially when his questions are addressed to such whose skill lies in that whereof he demands satisfaction. For then he offers them a fit occasion to please themselves in speaking, and he gains much knowledge himself by being possessed of their conceptions. And therefore it is most advisable for you to frequent the society of those who have more knowledge than yourself. Though there are who affect the company of ignorant persons, that so they may be taken for knowing men; yet they who are really knowing seek for the wise, that so they may know more. In the one you may be admired, but in the other you shall be acquainted with things that are worthy of admiration. And, I beseech you, which is better, to learn wisdom from those who are wise, or to be accounted wise by those who are ignorant? It is a pitiful thing, in my judgment, to be thought wise when you are not: and yet it is still more deplorable when you please yourself in being so thought by those who indeed are very fools. If you would win the reputation of wisdom, let it be with those who know what it is. But you must first have it

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before you have their esteem; and the first step to it is to be so wise as to know in what company it is to be learnt.

But it is not my intention to make you a long discourse on this subject; and therefore I shall not warn you of all those who are to be avoided, but only of one sort who will more abuse your time, and also do you greater mischief than any else beside that are not openly wicked. They that I mean are a talkative generation, who are ever chattering and babbling as if they had obtained a patent for prating: people that are so much in company with others, that they can never find leisure to keep any with themselves; who are a burden to themselves when they are at home, and to their neighbours when they are abroad; whose minds are stuffed with nothing but news, of which they are so full that they have no room for one wise thought to lodge there. But above all others, I would have you mark and shun a complaining sort of people who are ever finding fault, and never can be pleased. Their minds feed upon the sins or the harms of others, and they have always some news to make you sad. The subject of their discourse most commonly is, the evil of the days wherein they live. They always praise that which is past, and discommend that which is present. The wise men of former days they are ever magnifying, and they will allow nobody to be good but those who are dead. They seek for examples of piety in the acts and monuments of the church, which they would not follow nor applaud if they were alive again. Nay, they have in great admiration all that is done abroad, but are ill-affected to all that is done at home. Nothing can be so well managed, but they will shew you some error in it; nor can there be so profound a peace, but they will fright you with something that portends wars or other calamities. They never look upon the kingdom where they live, but they see it full of the tokens of God's wrath. There is no spot that can appear, but they make it a mark of the plagues of heaven that are coming upon us. They have lost their taste and judgment through the gall and bitterness of their own heart. Their choler overflows so much that they have no sense or relish of any of God's mercies, but cry out perpetually of woes and miseries. One would think by their talk that the tranquillity of their country is a trouble

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to them, and rather than have no disturbance they will begin it in themselves. Nay, let things be in what posture they will, you shall never find them at any ease. Let them change their faces never so much, they still retain the same sad countenance, and follow you with their complaints. If all things be in a prosperous estate, they fill you with fears of the evils that are to come. And if the times be very miserable, then they bethink themselves of the happiness which they could not see before in the days that are past. When they have nothing to say, they will give you a very grave nod, by which you must gather their heads are full, if their wisdom thought it fit at that time to empty them. And when they are afraid to speak their thoughts, then they will shake their head, and give a terrible shrug, as if all were nought and going to ruin. In short, you shall hear these men speak nothing but lamentations: and they will mix their words with such sighs, that you would think they laid to heart the badness of the times. But do not believe them: this may be no more but a copy of their countenance. For there are a number of them who conceive a secret joy when they hear an ill story of one whom they hate; and could not tell how to appear good unless they had some men's vices to speak against. They would not be able to live, if all men should leave their sins. There would not be found a man so bad as they, if all should become so good as they seem to desire. They would be more troubled at the reformation than they are at the disorders. And, unless their hearts were changed, they must either then be dumb, or else make faults where they could find none. And that is a matter, I assure you, very easy for them to do. For they never regard whether their complaints be just or unjust: and it would be to suppose them too reasonable, if we should think they are never discontented without a cause. Mingle not yourself therefore with such men; but judge it better a great deal to travel alone than to fall into such company. If you mean to finish your journey, stay not to listen to their tales; for they have no end, and they will detain you with them for ever. There is no thing, no person can escape the scourge of their tongues; and since those are innumerable, so are their stories.

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But in this and all the foregoing directions which I have given you, it will be of great use to mark the footsteps which you will meet withal of many travellers who have gone before you. Some of the prints of their feet you will find bigger, and others of them less than your own; but all of them will so encourage you, and excite you, and supply the place of a guide unto you, that I may leave the rest of their instructions. And indeed the wisdom of the ancient church seems herein to have been very great, who chose to honour the days of relaxation and intermission of labours with the names of the apostles and saints of God. It is fit, as I said, that we should sometimes use recreations, but they would teach us to begin and end them with acknowledgments of God. It is necessary that we cheer our spirits and refresh our minds, but we must still remember that there is no greater pleasure than to praise our Lord. When we divert ourselves, we should have the example of brave men before us. In all our sports and mirth there must nothing be admitted which is unbecoming the gravity and purity of good Christians. And therefore, let me entreat you, on all the festivals of the saints, to season your mind in the morning with the meditation of their holy lives. When you keep the days which preserve their memory, be sure to follow their virtues, which, in effect, will make them still to live in the world. It is a ridiculous thing to bless God for those examples which we never mean to imitate. It is monstrously absurd to maintain the memory of holy men's names with an utter forgetfulness of their piety. If they be capable of any grief in the blessed place where they now are, and have carried their passions away with them to the other world, it makes them sigh, one would think, to see the lewdness of those that honour them, and the disgrace that is done to religion under the countenance of their great names. It wounds them, sure, to hear themselves commended lavishly, and to see their lives reproached as guilty of too much severity. It was an old saying, but spoken with much simplicity and zeal by an old preacher, that he wondered the saints did not rise out of their graves to drive those away from their temples who use so much ceremony in celebrating their festivals, and take so little care to follow their virtues. But I may rather wonder with what face men can speak against those who neglect the ob-

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servance of these days, when they themselves are the chiefest cause of it, or the best colour for it. They dishonour all holy rites, and bring a reproach upon holy times; and if it had not been for such as them those days might have been in more credit, even with those who now despise them. What do we see, say those scrupulous persons, but riot and luxury at such seasons? All places are full of vomit, and men seem to be celebrating the feast of Ceres and Bacchus, i. e. of bread and wine, of some heathenish, drunken belly-god. They fancy there is no restraint laid upon their appetite if they do but strictly forbear their ordinary labours. They are like some bad Christians in the old times, who made no doubt of being drunk, so they did but take off their cups as they sat on the martyr's tomb. It is easy indeed for these objectors to see something else: they might behold some devout people who frequent the worship of God, and rejoice most in remembering their Saviour, and his great grace in sending those that preached the gospel to the world. But the number of the other are so great who never regard such things, that by looking on them they are tempted to take no notice of all the rest. The taverns are fuller by far than our churches, and the theatre is more frequented than the house of God. And therefore it is for such as you to set yourselves a-work to take away this objection which they will not take away themselves. Do you satisfy them that these days are no necessary cause of doing evil by your own example of doing good. Leave their argument no force at all, for it is in your power to do it; and let them see that the marriage between these festivals and profaneness is not so legitimate but they may be divorced. Deprive them of this colour, and leave their peevishness so naked that it may be exposed to the view of all. Or if they have taken a real offence, remove it out of their way, and let all that they allege have a full confutation in your holy life. Answer them by your behaviour, that there is no need to take away these days, for you can take away all the wickedness and leave them still remaining. Let them see that you can rest from your labours, and yet not spend your whole time in sport and play. Let them find the Bible or some good book in your hand oftener than they do the cards. Let your spirit rejoice in God your Saviour more than your body doth in

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meat and drink. Feed your soul upon the heavenly mysteries of our religion, and do not live as if the saints were only good purveyors for our kitchens. So will you both bring these days into esteem with others, and yourself into greater favour with God. And, I beseech you, desire all you know that they would not slight such admonitions as these I give you; but that, for the honour of our Lord, for the credit of his church, who hath appointed these solemnities, for the love of their own souls, who are intended to receive the benefit of them, they would behave themselves soberly and religiously at such seasons. That so the church may not be forced to do with these as it hath done with the feasts of love and other rites used by the apostles themselves, i. e. abolish and banish them because of men's obstinate abuse of them. For it is a very absurd thing (as one of the ancient guides saith) to study to honour the martyrs with too much fulness; who, we know, pleased God by fasting and abstinence. It is a preposterous way of doing honour to our Saviour, by pampering and pleasing ourselves; who, it is known, did honour his Father by denying himself and despising all the pleasures of the flesh. Therefore exhort every one to feast themselves with an holy fear. Let them make feasts of charity, and doing good to their poor neighbours. Let them be feasts of love to make us friends one with another: feasts of the spirit to put us in mind of the joys of the Lord and the eternal supper of the Lamb.

And now, I think, I may have leave to conclude my directions, (having put you into the hands of better guides than myself,) the sum whereof is briefly this: Let your principal design ever be to knit your heart to the love of Jesus, and the ardent desire of being with him at Jerusalem. Let this be your great business, to set your soul directly towards the place where he is, and to stir up in it such longings as these: O that I were with Jesus! When shall I come to Jesus? And since he is the way to himself, there is nothing more needful for the accomplishing your desire than to propose him before your eyes for your imitation. As for prayer, meditation, and such like things, they are to be designed to this end, that your love to him may be inflamed, your desire after him increased, and your resolution of doing his will, and treading in his steps,

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be made unmovable. Whatsoever therefore you find proper to advance that love, that desire, that resolution, be it praying or reading, discoursing or solitude, walking or reposing yourself, visiting of others or keeping at home; make use of it for the time that your soul relishes it, and as long as it quickens your desire and endeavour of enjoying the love of Jesus and the blessed sight of him at Jerusalem. But when any of these shall prove irksome to you, be not troubled at it, but try for that time some of the rest, which may be then more useful, because more pleasant to you. And when any of those enemies I have mentioned shall disturb your peace, beat them off as soon as you can; but be not troubled because they do not presently yield, provided you do not yield to them neither. And if, after a victory, they rally in the same manner again, be not affrighted at that neither, as if now they had greater courage; but endeavour only to beat them as before, and, by obtaining a new victory, to show that it is your courage which is increased. And do not think you shall be in danger to lose the victory over them if you suffer your bow sometimes to be unbent. Do not think a pilgrim must be so severe as never to recreate himself in the way he goes. By perpetual watchings and labours your enemies may undo you as well as by any other means. Take but heed that you fall not into their quarters when you divert yourself, and let but your pleasures still lie in your way, and you need not fear to make use of them. Remember the example of the saints of God, and stir up yourself to imitate their zeal and their discretion both together. And rest assured (my friend) that this good desire thus cherished, thus augmented, and thus strongly and wisely pursued, will bring you safe to the end of your pilgrimage, and set your feet in the midst of Jerusalem, where I shall be right glad to meet you.

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CHAP. XXIII.

What entertainment all these discourses met withal from the pilgrim. And of the pleasures he should find in his way, though encumbered with the forenamed enemies.

And now I am sure you will expect to hear that the pilgrim broke his silence; if not to thank this person for the satisfaction he had received, yet to tell him how much he thought himself engaged by the pains which he had most friendly taken for his satisfaction in the way to Jerusalem. But yet he could not for the present speak so much as one word; such a violent passion seizing on him, that it blocked up all other passages but only those for tears; which, gushing out apace, and seeking for more vent than they could find, caused a greater obstruction, and were ready to choke not only his words but also himself. The good man who had hitherto been his guide thought that now he must become his physician; and fearing that this passion might grow to some danger, and suspecting withal that it was the effect of a great sadness which he had conceived at his discourse, he went to him, and, taking him by the hand, entreated him to resist this tide so long till he could take so much breath as to tell him the cause of it. Now, that the pilgrim might show how obedient he was like to prove to the rest of his words, he strove so earnestly with himself, that many minutes were not passed before he recovered the use of his tongue, and was able thus to speak to him: You have obliged me, sir, so much beyond all my expression, by the instructions you have bestowed upon me, that, as an endeavour to do more than we can doth frequently make us to do just nothing at all, so I felt enough from thence arising to stifle my words, while my soul laboured such expressions of gratitude as could not be uttered. My tears, sir, could only tell you how much I think myself indebted to your charity: for they did not spring from grief, as perhaps you might imagine, but from a very great joy, which flowed partly from the remembrance of the Providence which brought me hither, and partly from the sense of your friendly love, but chiefly from the good news you tell me, that the way to such a blessed place as Jerusalem is encumbered with no greater difficulties than you have re-

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lated. O sir, I am overjoyed to hear that the journey will be no worse. It is a beginning of the pleasures I expect there, to know that the way is so good; for I was willing to have undertaken far greater things rather than forsake my resolution of going thither. And here his voice was intercepted by a new passion, like to the former, though it was not long before it had spent itself, and gave him liberty to utter his mind as freely as he pleased.

But before he could begin to discharge himself of those thoughts with which his soul seemed to be filled, the other prevented him, and told him that it was no small joy to him also to find himself so deceived, and meet with such a flood of joy in that place where he feared he should have found a deluge of sorrow. And since, said he, you take so great content in what I have said about the way to Jerusalem, which others hear with as much heaviness as you did with pleasure, I shall give you a fresh addition of joy by something else which I reserved as an encouragement to you, but now I see must be a part of your comfort. And truly, by what I shall say, you will plainly see how well Jesus rewards his servants that are willing to obey him, giving them far more than they durst expect, and, where they looked for nothing but trouble and anguish, causing joy and gladness to spring up unto them. You shall never meet, I am confident, with worse entertainments than I have mentioned in your way to Jerusalem, unless it be death, which we may meet with every where; but far better than have been spoken of I do not fear to promise, if the directions be followed which have been delivered to you. For besides the pleasures that will attend all your victories, which are indeed unspeakable, and more than can be numbered, I must tell you there is much contentment to be fetched from the consideration of the way you are to go. Though in many places it may be rugged and hard, as you already perceive, yet it is always very straight and easy to hit, having none of those windings and turnings in it that perplex and intricate men in the contrary paths; which, methinks, is no small comfort to a traveller. Do you not see how many thousand artsmen are at the labour to devise that they may cheat and circumvent their neighbours? what a number of shifts they are

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put unto to make good a lie, and to palliate a piece of knavery? what a loss they are at sometimes to compass their revenge, or to satisfy an unchaste desire? and what a vast burden of cares they are afflicted withal who do not depend on God? what troublesome thoughts, what fears and frights, what discontents and disgusts, and such like passions as disturb their quiet, they are continually pestered withal? There is none can tell you how these men wander up and down, and are at their wits' end, and when one way fails, are put with as much incertainty to devise a new, to attain that which they design. Whereas the ways wherein I would lead you are simple and plain, and lie so openly before your eyes, that you need not study what you have to do. Every body may soon know what justice is, and there needs no art at all to define it. To live purely, to forgive enemies, to trust in God, and to speak the truth, are things of no intricacy, and will not torture your mind for one moment to know what belongs unto them. They are very straight paths, and there are no labyrinths in which they involve you. Bring but honesty enough, and there needs not much wit, and no cunning at all, to follow these courses. Do but consider this well, and you will think it a great happiness to follow Jesus: for the obtaining of whose love and favour, of his rest and peace, you need not use any base arts, nor practise deceitful tricks, nor work treasons, nor be at the charge to calumniate your neighbours, nor take the pains to lie and cozen, to cog and flatter, to humour the lusts of men, to contradict your reason and wound your conscience. It will cost you neither bad nights nor unquiet sleep, nor vexatious days, nor careful thoughts; it will stand you neither in the loss of honour, nor the loss of life and happiness; but in natural and easy ways, in pleasant and safe courses, you may provide for the immortality of them both. I cannot but call them pleasant, because I am assured that when you are once used to the road, you will find the most rugged ways to be more delightful, and in all regards more easy to the pilgrim's feet, than any of those are which lead unto the opposite countries. The greatest difficulty will be at the first entrance, as indeed it uses to be in the beginning of all other labours; but when you and the ways are once acquainted, I am confident you will not be persuaded to turn into any other paths, though you were infallibly assured

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they would lead you to the imperial throne, and make you lord of the world. There is never a step of your journey (as it were easy for me to demonstrate) but it will have something of sweetness in it; your soul will close with every thing that you have to do, no otherwise than your stomach embraces the meat it loves; you shall not stay for all your peace till you come to Jesus at Jerusalem, but he will make you know that *all his ways are pleasantness, and all his paths are peace*[a].

And here I cannot but call to mind a pretty fable[b], or, as the author of it saith, a most wholesome and sacred story, under the scheme and in the habit of a tale; which will well represent unto you the easiness and pleasantness of the way to Jerusalem, and much encourage you in it. It is designed indeed to show how much more safe, facile, and happy it is for a prince to rule his subjects by his laws, than by an absolute will and licentious power; but it may indifferently serve to instruct all manner of persons (who seek the way to happiness as well as they, and may be taught by their great examples) how securely and comfortably they live who observe the laws of their Saviour above those whose lust is their law, and that have no other measure of goodness but their own sensual desires. It is in a writer, I grant, that knew nothing of Jerusalem; but this will give you the greater pleasure, to hear that your way thither is so sure that you may learn something of it from everybody, even from those that are but strangers to the place. The story is this:

"When Hercules was yet but a little youth, educated at Thebes, Mercury was one day sent to him from heaven, that he might make a trial of his inclinations, and encourage him in all virtuous and noble undertakings. For this end he carried him in unknown ways to the top of an high mountain, which it would be too long to give you a description of in my author's words. Thus much it is necessary for you to know, that it seemed but one to those who stood at the foot of it, having but one root and one body as far as their eyes could reach; but indeed was parted into two hills before it came to its utmost

[a] [Prov. iii. 17.]
[b] Dion. Prus. Orat. 1. de Reg. [tom. i. p. 65 sq.]

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height, which were also very widely distant the one from the other. The one of these was called the royal tower, or the temple of king Jupiter; the other had the name of the tyrannical fort, the seat in old time of the proud Typhon, whom Jupiter struck down with thunder from heaven. To these two there was a several access; and the way to that where royalty dwelt was very safe, wide, and plain, so that a man might ascend even in a chariot to that lofty place, without any danger or fear of falling: but to the other the way was narrow, crooked, and so dangerous, that a man must creep upon his hands and feet who intended to come thither. Nay, so full of hazard it was, that many who adventured to go in it had been seen to precipitate themselves, and were utterly lost in a great lake which was at the bottom of it. To those who beheld them afar off, they seemed, as I said before, to be but one; but the royal hill was far more eminent, lifting its head above the region of the air, and enjoying the benefit of the pure sky; and the other was more depressed, having a cap of clouds continually upon its head, so thick and foggy, that they made it an obscure and dismal place. Now Hercules being brought thither, and having the nature of this mountain thus shown to him, was already touched with so much ambition as to desire to be admitted into the interiors of them both: which he had no sooner signified than it was by Mercury granted; who said, Follow me, and thou shalt behold most clearly the vast disparity of these two, which is altogether hid from the eyes of fools. And presently he discovered to him, upon the top of the former, a woman sitting on a very splendid throne; who was exceeding beautiful, and of goodly proportions, clothed in white raiment, and having a sceptre in her hand, neither of silver nor gold, but of a more pure and shining nature, like to that which Juno wields. Her countenance was composed of a mixture of smiles and gravity; so that all good men looked confidently upon her, and the evil were no more able to behold her than they who have weak eyes can endure to turn them to the sun. She seemed, moreover, to be so fixed, and always like herself, that her countenance and eyes did not betray so much as an inclination to change her serious sweetness. And indeed it was admirable to see the quiet peaceableness and constant temper of that place, to behold the plenty of fair fruit

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which it every where yielded, and to observe how all the creatures of every kind which lived there did skip and dance round about it, as if they were tickled with an inward pleasure. Of gold and silver and other metals there lay great heaps before her; and yet she seemed to be pleased with none of them, but only in the fruits and in the several creatures which she beheld in such contentment surrounding her. When Hercules therefore had fixed his eyes a while upon her, he blushed exceedingly, and fell down in a humble veneration of her, no otherwise than as a dutiful child would do before a brave and generous mother. And having at last demanded of Mercury the name and condition of this person, he told him that it was the blessed and heavenly queen Basilea, the daughter of king Jupiter, whom he saw attended with many fair ladies that were easy to be discovered, and of no less nobility than the queen herself. It is true, replied the young man, I behold, to my no small satisfaction, several divine persons waiting upon that heaven-born Basilea; but may I be so happy as to know their names also? She, said Mercury, on the queen's right hand, who looks upon us with a stern mild countenance, is Justice, a person of great account, and very beautiful. Hard by her there stands Uprightness, or Integrity; who is so like the former, that you can scarce know them asunder, and is not inferior to her in fairness. As for her whom thou beholdest on the other hand, a woman very specious and goodly, bravely clothed, and smiling on us, her name is Peace. She that stands just before the queen, and even touches her sceptre, an ancient grey-headed matron, strong, and, as thou easily seest, very magnanimous; she is called Law, or, as others sometimes name her, Right Reason; a person who is of her privy council, and never stirs from her, without whom it is a crime to do, or so much as to think any thing.

"It would be too tedious to relate how the youth was ravished with this sight, and how he endeavoured to print his mind with it, so that he might never forget it. But in short, he gazed so long upon Basilea, and her royal attendants, that Mercury was fain to call to him, and bid him not to spend his whole time in that contemplation, but to descend a little with him, and look a while upon the other place also, which was not

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unworthy of his observation. And indeed he thought with himself that it might be useful to him as well as this; and therefore he willingly consenting to go whither he would carry him, Mercury instantly brought him to a certain path which led to the tyrannical tower. There they saw a great number who waited for an opportunity to crowd into it, (the way, as I told you, being very narrow,) and many that were contending, yea, killing one the other to force their passage. The father there was murdering his children, the children dragged their parents to execution, and one brother embrued his hands in another's blood: desiring nothing else but the greatest evil, and calling that the highest happiness, which is only power and folly married together. And first of all he bade him take notice of the entrance to that place, how dangerous it was, how full of precipices, and how it was so undermined in several passages, that the earth was ready to fall under those who trod upon it. All the way likewise he showed him was besmeared with blood, and paved with skulls and dead men's bones, so that he saw it was not fit to let him set his foot in it; but he carried him in a fairer tract to an advantageous place, where he might take a just prospect of that part of the mountain whereon Tyranny had seated herself. To a great height she was raised, though (as I noted before) she could not be elevated to such a pitch as to free herself from the vapours and mists which infect these lower regions. But he could clearly discern that she studied to be like the incomparable Basilea, and therefore feigned and counterfeited as much as she could the face, the gestures, the very air of that queen of beauties; nay, her throne seemed to be far higher and better than the other's, having many fair sculptures upon it, and being adorned with gold, ivory, ebony, and such like varieties, as riches furnished her withal: but yet the foot of the throne was not fixed, nor could all the wealth she was mistress of procure that it might stand fast without any shaking or tottering at all. Nor was there any thing orderly and handsomely disposed about her; but every thing was fashioned to comport with the ends of glory, pride and luxury, which in truth reigned over her, as she over others. Many sceptres there were in her hand, and more than one diadem upon her head; but they could not make her beautiful, because the more she studied to

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imitate the other's manners, the more deformed and ugly she appeared. When she thought to come forth with her friendly smiles, the eyes of those that looked upon her were entertained with nothing but a base and filthy kind of crafty grin. Instead also of the gravity which she affected, a strange fierceness and terror discovered itself in her looks. Nay, that she might seem magnanimous, she would not often cast her eyes on those who approached her, but turn them another way with a lofty disdain; whereby she became the object of all men's hatred, as they were of her scorn. Care she took of nobody but herself; nor could she by all her care make herself to sit in quiet; but often stared round about her, and started up, or leaped out of her throne, as if she sat uneasily, or apprehended some approaching danger. Gold she sometimes filthily kept in her very bosom; sometimes in a fright threw it abroad among the people; and then again snatched it out of their hands, and was so greedy of it, that she pillaged every body that had but the least grain of it about them. And not to name her garments, which he says were of divers colours, she herself used to be of as many colours as they: being sometimes in fears, sometimes in anger; sometimes troubled with a fit of jealousy, and sometimes over-confident of herself and others; now being very humble and servile, and presently after proud and insolent; at this moment laughing very loudly, and the next as bitterly bewailing some misfortune or other. They that were about her also were as different from the attendants before named as she herself was from the queen. Their names were Cruelty, Contumely, Iniquity, and Sedition, who all served only to corrupt her and bring her to destruction. And I must not forget to relate, that instead of Friendship, of which all are in so great need, she was daily attended by a servile and illiberal fellow called Flattery, who was no less treacherous to her than the rest, and indeed, above all others, sought her ruin. He was ever studying to form pleasing propositions; and if they were but grateful to her it was sufficient, for he never took any care about the good or hurt that was in them. It was a wonder to observe the arts whereby he insinuated himself into her mind; what a strict intelligence he kept with her passions, and how he seized on all the avenues, and locked up all the passages of her soul when he was once possessed of it, that none could be

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admitted to such a confidence as himself. He was ever whispering some of his lewd maxims into her ear, and breathing some vicious counsel or other into her heart: but he did it so softly, that they could then hear nothing that he said, and therefore he that relates the story hath reported nothing of it. But I have been informed by another, who hath approached very near to the secrets of that villainy, that he was wont to advance such doctrines as these:—That a prince ought not to suffer himself to be bound with the fetters of laws: that it was below him to be subject to the fancies and visions of ancient legislators: that every thing was just which was his will; and that it was a weak and feeble thing to seek to be beloved. A great spirit ought rather to endeavour to make himself feared: and, at the most, he should aim only at this, that he might not be hated. Nay, I have heard that he should say, (and I give you the very words of the person from whom I had it,) that honesty was the virtue of a merchant, and not of a sovereign: that in heaven they put the very oaths of princes in the same scales with those of lovers: that Jupiter commands them to be thrown into the wind as trivial things, and of no value. For this he alleged some poet, for they were all the divines which he consulted, and were frequently also abused by him. And so in a way of fooling and telling of tales he persuaded her that she need not keep her word, nor tie herself to follow any thing else but her own desires. It would be too long to tell you how ingenious this person was in inventing pleasures; and how he studied to endear himself by shameful services. And indeed most of those things were then concealed, and had a curtain drawn before them; only thus much he overheard: that he jeered at virtue, and laughed at piety as a sneaking quality, and the effect of a creeping, weak and superstitious mind. And that he commended a voluptuous life out of all measure, calling them fools whose nice and delicate consciences made them rude and cruel to their flesh.

"Now when Hercules had carefully viewed this golden creature, with all her servants, as well as he had done the other, Mercury, according to his commission, demanded of him, that he should tell him truly which of these did please him best, and was held by him in greatest admiration. To

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which he presently replied, In good sadness, the former seemed to me so glorious, that I not only loved and admired her, but took her for a goddess, and thought her worthy of worship and imitation: but this is so odious and abominable in my opinion, that I would gladly have the liberty to throw her headlong from this high rock, and break her neck. You know how much I loathe the brutishness of her life, (continued he, as some authors relate,) and how I despise all her base and sordid pleasures. For when pleasure herself appeared to me in a vision, and presented me with all her beauties, you may well remember how I scorned her courtship, and resolved to embrace laborious virtue as the mistress of greater pleasures. Therefore if it be not lawful for me to lay violent hands on that fury, yet let the heavens spurn her into that condition which she kicks others down into, and let not prosperous impiety be always held as good as virtue. This heat of his Mercury repressed, and bade him have patience in as great esteem as any of the virtues he had beheld; but his judgment which he had given in favour of Basilea he praised and commended as it did deserve; and having told it unto Jupiter, that was the thing, they say, which gained him the empire of the world, and moved the heavens to commit all mankind to his care and government."

I doubt I have tired you with this long story, but I shall not trouble you much further. Nor shall I study to show you how fitly may hence be represented the happiness of all other men in their several conditions who take the ways of piety, and the misery of all the rest who tread in any other path; for you are of capacity to do this service for yourself. All that I shall say is only this, that to the men of this world they seem the very same as the mountain in the story did: and because all things here fall alike to all, they think it is all one what course a man holds if it be but conformable to his own appetite. But you may look upon me, if you please, as standing in the place and quality of a Mercury to you, to show you the holy hill of God, and the beauteous city which is built upon it, and the glorious Monarch which inhabits it, together with the way which leads thither, and the vast advantages which it hath over that Babel which men have built in their own fancies, and which would fain reach

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up to heaven, but tumbles down together with them into endless ruin. And truly I cannot but fancy you to be another courageous Hercules, who seeing how high the ascent to that city is, and over what difficulties you are to climb, yet are not at all dismayed, but resolved to march in the way thither, though all the silver and gold, all the jollity and pleasure of the world should lie in the way on the other side. The heavens no doubt applaud your choice, and they bid me tell you it shall be well rewarded; nay, I have already shown you that you must needs be more happy in that course than in any else that can be invented. For though the hill be high and steep which you are to mount, yet the way is plain and easy, pleasures guard it round about, and a glorious place it brings you unto at the last. As you will totally escape those ways wherein, according to the story now told, there are nothing but intricacy and uncertainty, mists and darkness, trouble and sorrow, anxiety and disquiet, and in a word a great deal of pains to make a man doubly miserable; so you will be conducted in plain, natural, and unperplexed paths, in paths of pleasure and peace, of confidence and assurance, of light and serenity, of settledness and steadiness of mind, which will not let you be a stranger to an abundant happiness. I know the pretended satisfactions in the other way may make a greater show, and appear more splendid, accompanied with more pomp and noise: but if you be in love with still and silent joys, with grave delights and serious pleasures, they are only to be found in this way which I have pointed you unto. You shall never tremble in the midst of these enjoyments, nor shall you be troubled with fear lest you should lose your happiness. There are no mock-smiles here, when the heart is wrung within: but the ease of the mind makes the countenance smooth, and the joy of the heart casts a splendour into the eyes, and a sweetness into the face. You shall never be flattered and cheated here with the delusions of momentary pleasures: but every taste you have of joy shall be an assurance of an everlasting felicity. Nay, you shall give a great joy to others also, and please them as well as yourself. You shall make all that are about you to rejoice, and their contentment will be an addition to your own. The satisfaction of making others happy, and seeing them full of comfort by your means, will not let you doubt of your own happi-

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ness, nor want that peace which you give to them. And then after all this, you shall find yourself at last, though not made master of all this world, yet brought to Jerusalem, the city of the great King, of the Lord of all; there to reign with him in eternal glory.

CHAP. XXIV.

Upon the pilgrim's request, the guide enters into a further description of the pleasures of the way to Jerusalem; and answers some scruples of his about it. The difficulty of the beginning of his journey. Of taking up the cross that might lie in his way; and such like things.

I WILL not undertake to express to you the silent admiration wherewith the pilgrim entertained this discourse. He looked upon him with no less wonder than if he had thought him an envoy from heaven, and taken him to be despatched with a message immediately from God to transport him thither. He was almost lost in a new passion, and if it had not been for fear that the good man would here make an end if he did not entreat him to continue his discourse, he had abandoned himself to those pleasant imaginations which the telling of that story had raised in his mind. But recovering himself from their enticements, he got leave of them to speak to his guide to this effect. Ah, sir, what a favour have you done me! Into what a delightful train of thoughts have you led me! It is impossible to relate the pleasure you have now given me. I do not think that yourself can bestow the like upon me by any other means, but only by making this story a little longer. You do it a great deal of wrong, I assure you, in calling it tedious; for if it were lawful to gratify myself in the way that I fancy most, I should wish that it might last to the end of my life. You are a true Mercury indeed, the orator of the great King, the interpreter of God. You are sent to do me a double kindness; first to be my guide, and then to ravish me into the way you show me, by your eloquence. May not the celestial natures be presumed to have some patience, as well as so much charity? Shall I offend you if I desire a more particular description of the ease and pleasure which you promise me in my way? or

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cannot you stay so long as to pull a little scruple out of my mind, and tell me how this way can be so broad as your story saith, since I have learnt of one more sacred, that it is *strait and narrow?* I know I am indebted to you but too much for the favours you have already done me; and except it be in my hearty wishes I can never be so bountiful as you have been. But yet give me leave to say that this excessive freeness is a temptation to run further in your debt. If you had been more reserved at the first, you had made me more modest; but now that you have been so prodigal of your counsel, pardon me if I think that I have nothing else to accuse of my confidence. If you would not have had me become such a beggar, you should not have been so generous: you should either have withheld your hand sooner, or not be offended that I implore a fresh taste of your liberality. Go on, good sir, to add to my obligations: for though they are so great already, that you force me to be ungrateful by leaving me no power, not so much as that of words, to thank you; yet let me see you take such a pleasure in doing of good, that you think yourself sufficiently paid for what you have done, by gaining men's will to a hearty desire of receiving more.

I am no master of eloquence, said the guide, but you are beholden, as I told you, to a stranger for that pleasant description. It is enough for me if I can point at the way to heaven, and give you some plain and familiar directions how to find it. But you must persuade yourself to learn and follow those instructions, and not expect the assistance of any rhetoric of mine to woo your heart to entertain them. And truly if I may judge by what you just now said, you have power enough in your own hands to charm your affections, and insinuate what I teach you into their favour. You may be indebted to yourself more than to me; and owe your happiness rather to your own persuasion than any oratory that I can employ. But yet if you can be content with such dry narrations as I am able to make, you cannot demand any thing with more ease than I shall yield to the satisfaction of your desires. It will be no trouble to me, I assure you, to prolong my discourse on this delightful theme, and I shall more gratify myself thereby than oblige you; though I must needs say that I think there is not

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so much need of it as you may imagine. You may take this upon my credit, that you will better experiment the pleasure of your way as you go along, than it is possible to perceive it by the most accurate description which can be made of it by the pen or tongue of man. You have often, no doubt, tasted the sweetness of honey: but suppose you had only seen the golden colour of it with your eyes, or only heard a graceful speaker make an oration in its praise; would either of these have made you acquainted with it, so well as one little lick with your tongue is able to do? The case is not at all different here, and therefore begin to prosecute your resolution presently of travelling to Jerusalem; go to the ways themselves to learn their pleasantness; for they will teach you more in an instant than I can do by many of my long discourses. But yet that you may not imagine I put you off, and refer you thither only to spare my pains, I shall at least give you some satisfaction in the truth of what I say, and convince your reason that you must needs find the ways you are to pass very delightful, notwithstanding all those difficulties which you may meet withal.

All the actions of nature you will grant to be very pleasant, for they flow from us with ease and facility; and they also tickle us as they pass along, because they run smoothly, and do not grate upon us. Now there is nothing plainer than that the ways of temperance, charity, trust in God, and such like wherein you are to walk, are most comfortable to the right frame and constitution of your soul. You will move consonantly to your own principles which God hath naturally endued you withal: you will but follow the inclination of rational nature, and that in its highest improvement, which must needs yield you the highest delight and satisfaction. Will you but be pleased for the proof of this to ask your soul a few questions? I am confident, if it go about to resolve them, it will give itself a sense of the goodness of the paths of piety; and without any other evidence than they carry in themselves, it will pronounce that they are far easier, and so infinitely more sweet than any that oppose them. I appeal to you, and to all the world, whether it be not a business of quicker despatch to forgive an injury than to take revenge for it? whether he doth not more seek his own ease and repose who studies to forget the malice of

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men towards him, than he that suffers the remembrance of it to ferment and boil perpetually in his mind? Is it not a business of less difficulty to be peaceable and quiet, than to be ever contending, quarrelling and falling out with our neighbours? And what toil is there in sitting still, and not so much as lifting up our hands? and on the other side, what labour is fighting, and beating, and wounding one another? Is it not far more easy to hold one's peace, than to rail and revile as much as we please? Which puts us to more pains, to say nothing but well of others, or to be always finding fault, and still speaking evil of them? Meekness seems to me to be far less troublesome than anger and rage. Charity is more easy and delightsome than covetousness and scraping up of wealth. To drink little is sooner and easier done, than to drink and swill as if we were in a perpetual fever. And I cannot see what should hinder you from confessing instantly that it is a thing of far more ease and facility to live by faith in God, to depend on his providence in honest ways, and to cast our burden upon him, than to be always careful and solicitous, to be ever vexing ourselves with worldly thoughts, and to be devising shifts and naughty arts how to get more than we need. Is it any burden to praise God for the blessings he sends us? or, is it not more natural than to praise and commend ourselves, to which all men seem so forward? And how can it be so toilsome to pray to him for what we want, as it is to spend our time in a laborious diligence, without a serious and hearty acknowledgment of him? To be humble and modest is far more agreeable, than to bear it high, and lift up ourselves above others. It is nothing so hard to obey governors, as to be turbulent, and fall into rebellion against them. Yea, to suffer wrongs breeds us less molestation than to do them. To be patient creates us not half so much trouble, as it doth to vex, and fret, and fume within ourselves. To rejoice in God is a thing that more gratifies than all the pleasures of sense. And even to mourn for our sins doth give us more satisfaction than to mourn and grieve for worldly losses.

It would be a very easy matter, I believe you discern, to make a long discourse on this argument: as also to shew that besides the ease and the pleasure that there is doing these

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things, they leave also a certain joy and contentment when they are done. They that hold the course into which you are entering do feel that every step they take leaves a certain print behind it, which it is an infinite delight to reflect upon. They enjoy a repose and security in their consciences, which is not to be uttered, and remain in great tranquillity all their lives. There is nobody that can rob them of their pleasures; neither can any man intercept them, and hinder them from coming into their souls; nor will they themselves be ever weary of them, or desire to make an exchange of them for some other contentment. There is no disgust in those holy delights. They breed no dislike by their frequent enjoyment. They depend not as others do on infinite circumstances, whereof the want of any one makes them either odious or unprofitable; but they have a constant cause, and depend but upon one thing, which is always present, and inseparable from all good souls. They live without fear in their possessions, and without distrust in their wants. They do not blush in the company of others, nor do they tremble when they are alone. They are not bitten with remorse, nor covered with shame for what is past; and their present condition is not troubled with any disquiet, and they have nothing but fair and goodly hopes for the time to come. In fine, they are the portion of God in the world, they are his treasure, they are his delight and his joy: and whensoever he makes them know so much, there is not an higher pleasure that the heart of man is capable to possess. To make joy in heaven, to give delight to the King of the world, O what a ravishment is it! What glorious hopes doth the thought of it inspire us withal! It would make any man cry out, I will be good; I vow that I will be good, though the whole world should oppose me in it. Your very flesh will consent to be one of the subjects of Jesus, if you do but let it know the happiness that he will bring unto it. It will become a votary to him, when you understand how much the better it shall fare for that repose of your mind, and the constant pleasure of a regular life. Your very stomach cannot but commend his measures, and submit itself to his laws, who lays no burden upon it, but rather eases it of all its loads. It will complain of your unkindness, if you deny it the favour of being absolutely governed by his will. There is never a drop of

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blood in your body but had rather be spilt in his service, than that you should refuse his blessed life, which leads to such endless felicity to the whole man. Consult every thing about you: take advice of every thing that belongs to you; and it will confess that there is no such master of pleasure in the whole world as the holy Jesus; that it is the greatest Epicurism to be one of his followers; and that if a man should study till the world's end, he would never cast himself into such an ecstasy of joy, as the knowledge and belief of what he hath promised, and an heart full of love to him proportionable to that belief, will put him into. And therefore it is a wonder that the voluptuaries of the world go to any other school than his, to learn the art of making much of themselves. Here is true pleasure; here is the very spring of all contentment. It is the very inscription upon the door or entrance of Christ's school, that *blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed are the pure in heart, blessed are the meek, blessed are the peaceable, blessed are the merciful, yea, blessed are they that mourn, and that suffer for righteousness' sake.* Nor are these vain brags and empty boasts, like the papers which empirics set upon posts pretending to the cure of all diseases: but if any man will try, he shall find all this to be the very truth; he shall preach this doctrine himself to the world, he shall avow it confidently to all that he meets, that Jesus only brings true rest to their souls and bodies. Nor is the trial of such difficulty that you or any man else should refuse it. When you have left my company and are retired to yourself, do but fix your mind, as long as you are wont to do on lesser businesses, upon these truths; that Jesus is exalted at the right hand of God, that he hath received a kingdom and glory from the Father, that he hath power to raise up you to sit with him in his throne, that he will infallibly take you up to himself, that you may be there where he is, and behold the glory which God hath given him; and then tell me if ever you felt any thing touch your heart with such a pleasure as the bare contemplation of those divine enjoyments. The very fancy of them is delightful. Such a dream, if a man was in it, he would not lose for all that he sees here. He would be troubled to be awaked, and shut his eyes again, wishing that it may know no end. And therefore the assurance of these things to be a cer-

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tain truth, which the Holy Ghost coming down from Jesus hath given to us, must needs give us a far greater satisfaction: a satisfaction as much beyond that of fancy, as a sensible enjoyment is beyond a dream. And what the contentment will be if we suffer these truths to go down to our hearts, to ravish our wills, to breathe into us the love of Jesus, and to bring all those blessed virtues into our esteem and affection, I have not power enough to express. But as you love your soul, do not deny it your best endeavour, that before this day be at an end, you may have a real feeling of it.

And now it may be fit for your fuller conviction in this particular, to bid you turn your eyes to the condition of other men who are engaged in a quite contrary course; and you will soon see that to be a pleasant path wherein I conduct you, by the misery and confusion which you will discern in their lives. It will not be long before you be satisfied that they are not in a state of nature. They will presently discover to you that they are not as they should be: nay, that they would be something else than what they are, and that long use and custom hath rendered contradictions familiar to them. There is not one of them but he loves that which he hates, and pursues that which he flies, and praises that which he cannot but also discommend. There are strange seditions and clashings in their desires, and they are tossed about with I know not how many contrary winds. They all desire to be rich, and yet this very desire will not let them be so. They fear nothing more than need, and yet they are ever in great want and cannot be filled. For they always think that which they have to be less than that which they have not, and they take that which is present to be so little, that it is not worth the notice in compare of what they expect in time to come. And is there any greater consistency in their desires of pleasure? Alas, they pursue mirth, but they ever pull upon their heads a great deal of sorrow. They would have nothing at all but sweetness; and the more greedy they are of it, the greater is their bitterness. When they think to heighten their delights, they quite destroy them and take them away. When they would leave no place empty, they are so full that they cannot feel them. Do not you see all this verified in drunken fools? Where is

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their pleasure after their understanding is once blasted with the fumes of wine? A sponge is as good a judge as they of pleasures, which without any difference sucks in the best and the worst of liquors. And as for death, which of them is there that doth not fear it? and yet they take no care at all to live. They dread diseases, and yet they will not abstain from noxious and unwholesome things. When any trouble falls upon them, then they wish they were out of the world, and bless those that are dead; and yet when death comes, though they are never so ill, they wish it would stay a little longer. They hate many times to live, and yet they are afraid to die. They think them happy who are in the other world, but yet they are loath to come among them. They cry out of the evils which they suffer, and yet they would fain spin out the most miserable life to the greatest length. But there is another thing that is stranger than this. For you have often heard them complain (I believe) of the great scarcity of time, and yet which of them is there that is not so prodigal of it as if he had half an age to spare? They say that it runs away very swiftly from us, and yet they spur on their hours, and would have them fly away faster than they do, as if they had too many of them. There are but a few seasons, they say, in time, and yet they let those opportunities grow old in their hands, and suffer them to be bald before they mind to apprehend them. And did you ever mark how they deal one with another? Each man suspects his fellow, because he deserves to be suspected himself. Every one is afraid to be deceived, and labours all he can to deceive. He hath a great mind to be revenged, and yet he would not have justice itself take any vengeance of him. He hates tyranny, and yet he would feign be the tyrant. He would have all men subject to those laws which he hath no mind to observe. He accuses many things as base, but will not stick to do them. And, on the contrary, he holds good fortune in great estimation, but cares not a rush for virtue, which yet he acknowledges deserves only to be fortunate[b]. Philosophers themselves have been ashamed to see how they all behave themselves in every condition like unconstant fools. They abhor war, but cannot tell how to live in peace. They are miserably dejected if they be made slaves,

[b] Max. Tyr. Dissert. 20. [al. 35. § 2. tom. ii. p. 184.]

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but are so insolent in liberty that they draw servitude upon them. They desire children, and when they have them take no care about them. They would leave them estates, but no virtue to use them well, and to preserve them. They desire to have their family alway flourish, but breed them so as if they meant it should die with the next generation. Nay, God himself is not better used by them. For they pray to him as if he was able to do them good, and yet they affront him as if it was not in his power to do them hurt. At other times they fear him, as if he could severely punish, and yet forswear themselves, as if he had no being but only when they pleased. But that I may not run into infinite particulars, let us once for all take a view of those who would attain to great honours; and see by what low, mean, and servile practices they labour to ascend unto them. There is nothing which their heart abhors more than subjection to others, and yet they are forced to the basest prostrations. They stoop to the very feet of those upon whose heads they would tread. They kiss those hands, which they wish a thousand times were cut off, if they oppose their designs. Their very idleness is in action day and night. The compliments and ceremonies they bestow upon others are a business of greater trouble than the ruling of provinces and disposing of kingdoms. It may seem strange, but there is nothing truer, that if a man would climb to the highest place in the world, it is necessary he should become lame, and breathe short, and take such little steps, as if a long ague had but just left him to the use of his legs; and, in one word, seem altogether unfit for the business he designs. You know what a glory it is to be the supposed head of all Christendom. And yet they that are well acquainted with the ways to that office tell us in plain terms that he must keep his bed, and use all the arts which physic can assist him withal, not to be well, but to be ill, who hopes to attain that dignity. He must put himself into a feverish heat; he must beg the help of defluxions and catarrhs; he must procure a pale look and a meagre aspect; he must cough as if he was calling for his grave; or else he must lose that place which will not come at easier rates. And now what think you? Are not these fine ways to glory? Have not they a great mind to trouble themselves, that purchase trouble at so great a price? For the

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rising to high places (as a wise man of our own observes[a]) is very laborious, and by pains men come to greater pains: nay, it is sometimes very base, and by indignities men come to dignities. Perhaps this ambitious fool doth flatter continually those whom he hates: he applauds and praises those whom he despises: he admires all that is ill done: he approves of all that a wicked and debauched appetite desires: he speaks against his conscience, and smiles on him whom he could bite and fasten his teeth upon with all his heart. He dissembles all his resentments; and though he love revenge as well as his life, yet he is put to the pains of stifling all those passions which are its servants. There is a fire in his bones, and he dare not give it the least vent, that others may feel it as well as himself. He swallows all the affronts which a porter gives him at a great man's gate; and he bribes those with gifts whom he wishes dead, that he might enjoy their places. And when he is mounted to the top of his desires, I beseech you, on what pinnacles doth he tread? which are so small, that there is but a little between him and the danger of a fall; and withal so sharp, that they wound the feet which tread upon them. And did you never perceive the delight that some men take in laughing at the meanness of the extraction of this meteor? The greatest honours are not able to cleanse the blemishes of his family: and when he hath done all that he can, bold spirits will throw in his face the dirt from whence he is sprung, and wound him with a remembrance that he is but a new man.

But then if one of these persons chance to drop down to the place where he was before, and become the object of scorn, in what a sad condition is he? When the play is ended, and the high-heeled buskins are pulled off which raised him above others, and the gaudy clothes are torn from his back, and he returns to his first form, he becomes a despicable creature even to himself. So mad a thing it is to judge of a man by the height of honour to which he is advanced, for it is as if you would take the measure of a statue by the pedestal on which it stands. But besides all this, the conscience he hath of his crimes will render him still more miserable, because it

[a] [Bacon, Essay on Great Place. Works, vol. i. p. 33.]

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will ever put him in mind that he deserves his misery. And as for others, it will likewise be a dangerous thing for any man to undertake the protection or comfort of such a person, who is known to have merited his misfortune. Nay, more than this, we have heard of such fools, that, before they had lost all their imaginary happiness, have deprived themselves of the remainder, out of vexation that it did not continue as great as before. So that great glutton, Apicius, having wasted the best part of his estate, and finding but two hundred thousand crowns remaining, imagined himself a beggar, and drunk a draught of poison, because he thought he had not sufficient to maintain his ancient riot. For which he was soundly jeered by one of the sages of those days, who said this was the most wholesome draught that ever he made, which put an end to such a dissolute life.

Thus, you see, these vicious men are so hated while they are alive, and their memory is so persecuted when they are dead, that, I believe, you would not stand in one of their places. And the more injuries they have done to others to raise themselves, the more odious they grow, and the more curses follow them to their graves. So toilsome it is to follow those courses, that men will not suffer them to rest in peace even in the sanctuary and common refuge of all the miserable. They that did not know how to be revenged on their persons while they were here, are wont to fall upon the phantasm which they have left of themselves in their imagination; and to wreak their spleen upon their memory, and stab their reputation. They please themselves in their greatness for a while, and then they pay very dearly for it. Nay, the time of their pleasure is so small, that they come to it by a far longer time of pains; and when they enjoy it, he scarce knows how to distinguish the moments of the one from those of the other, for pains are either mingled with their pleasures, or presently tread upon the heels of them.

All which when I consider, it calls to my mind the story of the fool, who, passing through the forest of Ravenna, as he came from Rome, filled a whole wallet and a pillow-bear top full of flies, gnats, and hornets, of which that place affords good

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store, and of no small bigness, to bring them home with him. Whither when he was arrived, he sent to his friends and kinsfolks round about, desiring to see them, that he might present them with some rarities and curious things which he had brought from Rome. Though they knew him to be a ninny, yet they could not imagine him to be such a sot as afterward they found him; but fancied that he might have lit upon something in his journey which might be worth one of their's to go and see it. But when they were met together, and were come into his chamber, after many compliments and great expectations, he had nothing to entertain them withal but a huge number of those troublesome creatures which he poured out of his bags upon them; thinking, because of their various colours, that they were precious things, and would yield a fine sight unto his friends. They laughed a little at the jest at first, but they soon felt there was no cause, when they found them about their ears, and flying in their faces and their eyes in such a manner, that it was no small affliction and pain unto them[h]. Just such, methinks, is the condition of those who live in sin. They are promised fine things and secret delights by the temptations which send to them and invite them into their society. Great hopes are given them of new pleasures, and such rare satisfactions as hitherto they have not met withal. And they are such fools as to believe their imagination or an idle companion, who entices them by fair speeches, though they know very well how often they and others have been deluded by such flatteries. The sin indeed seems pretty at the first; it makes them some sport for a while, and you think that they are much pleased. But, alas! they come a great way for that short mirth, and it is so trivial, that it is not worth a fly; and at last they are stung worse than by a whole nest of angry wasps. Their conscience is always buzzing some evil in their ears; they are persecuted by it continually, and it follows them with its secret murmurs; they are tormented as with a swarm of hornets, which will never

[h] [This eccentric anecdote, the hero of which is named Tonino dà Buffalora, is derived from the 'Hospidale de' Pazzi incurabili' of Garzoni, Disc. ix. p. 23. Opere, 4to. Ven. 1617. An English translation of this work had appeared, entitled, 'The Hospital of Incurable Fools,' 4to. Lond. 1600.]

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cease to trouble them as long as they stay there, and will not open the door and run away from their sins.

And truly by this time it is like you will wonder that they should be content to stay in their company. You may very well ask, What do these men mean thus to trouble themselves, when there is such a visible way to their peace and quiet? Why do not they break loose from their sins, and seek their satisfaction in some other course? Had they not better become good, than be at so much pains to make themselves miserably bad? They cannot but discern, sure, that happiness lies not in their road; and that to enjoy repose, they must become the followers of virtue. And to tell you my mind plainly, I verily think there is a number of them would gladly be her servants, if to be made so might be wholly the act of another, and not at all their own. They would think it a blessed change to do well, as naturally as they do ill; if this new nature would but come into them of itself, and not require their pains to quit the old. They commend the ways of virtue, and think them happy who live temperately and chastely; but how to get into them, there is the difficulty. They would gladly find themselves there the very next moment, but to travel thither is a business of too much labour. Their old life is a very great trouble to them, but there is some trouble also in the beginning of a new. Though the way that I shew you be so pleasant, that they who are not in it cannot but have a mind to be translated thither; yet the entrance of it is not without some difficulties. The stings which I told you are in their conscience, cannot be pulled out without more pain than they are willing to endure. It is a business of much anguish to have the wounds which are made in their natures searched and dressed, and such applications made as will draw out all the corruption and filth. They had rather palliate their sores, than have them raked into, in order to their being healed. It is a new thing to which we would engage them, and they apprehend it so laborious also, that they think it better to continue as they are, than with a great deal of pains to take upon them another burden. They that are free from their prepossessions find excellent things to be very irksome when they first begin to set about them. With what unwillingness do children learn their first letters, though

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afterward it prove delightful to be able to read! And how hard do most men find the first step to any science, which, when they are a little masters of, is infinitely pleasant! And therefore every one must expect to find the gate to be strait which opens to that way wherein you are to travel. There all their old customs are to be put off. There I know not how many desires of the flesh are to be denied and left behind. There a man must be stripped stark naked: he must become like a little child, and reduced just to nothing in his own eyes, that so he may be able to enter. And then also there are many strange paths present themselves with which he hath had no acquaintance; which is the cause that many are affrighted and start back again, rather than they will undergo the trouble of pressing in at so strait a passage. Though, if it be well considered, this is just such a folly as if a man in a long journey, perceiving himself out of his way, should choose still to go on in his error, rather than go back again, because of the many wearisome steps which he must be forced to take before he recover the right road. The further he goes on, the further is he out of his way; and consequently must never come to his journey's end, unless it be with greater pains hereafter than those which he now avoids.

But not to deceive you, (nor forget a short answer to your other doubt,) I must also let you know, that the way itself, for a few of the first miles, is very narrow as well as the gate, though afterwards it be as wide and broad as heart can wish. That which a man hath put off in resolution at his entrance into the way, he may find still to hang upon him when he comes to move, and very loath to be quite shaken off. His desires which he had contracted may begin to stir and to enlarge themselves, and complain that they are confined too much, and reduced into too narrow a room. And so it will still seem, till by often denials they grow content, and make room for nobler desires to spring up in him. Then will he think himself pressed and straitened no more, when he finds his soul enlarged another way, and his appetites carried unsatiably toward diviner objects. Then he will not say he is pent up, when he feels that the retrenching of his worldly desires hath set his heart at liberty to go whither it naturally would, without any restraints

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upon it. He will find that he is at ease by being straitened; that he hath got his freedom by being bound up; and that he enjoys as much as he desires by denying and paring of his desires. It may seem indeed a strange way of enlarging our souls, by bringing their desires into a narrow compass: but if you consider it, there is nothing truer than that it is much better, and more to our content, not to desire some things at all, than to desire them, and withal to have them as much as we desire. As, for example, we see men mad to have their fill of bodily pleasure. But how doth it fare with them at that season? Have not these desires brought a torment to them? No doubt they have much more pleasure then, in abstaining from that of which they were so greedy, than in continuing to enjoy it. Why should it not be thought better then to do that out of virtue which disordered fulness forces them to? Is it not much more eligible to abstain out of choice than not to forbear till we are constrained? Yes, verily; and men would receive a greater satisfaction in subduing such mad desires than it is possible to do in the fulfilling of them. It is with these carnal people, saith one of the old directors in the way to Jerusalem, as if a man should be so dry, that he calls for one cup after another, and though he drink never so much, yet he cannot quench his thirst. Certainly such a man cannot be esteemed happy, because he never wants liquor, but hath still at hand as much as he desires. No, he is the happy man, who, feeling no thirst, is free from this necessity of drinking so much, and is no way urged to desire it. For the first is like a man in a burning fever, and the other like one that enjoys a perfect health. And there is another of them also who verifies this in his own example; for he confesses, that walking one day with some friends through the city of Milan, having his head full of an oration he was to make in the emperor's praise, and his heart thirsting after glory and preferment, which he thought it would procure him, and therewith very much contentment: he chanced to cast his eye upon a beggar, who having newly received an alms, was very blithe, and of a pleasant countenance. At which spectacle he fetched a deep sigh, and said to his company, What a mischief is this, that I should thus drag my own infelicity after me by the fury of my desires, and with so much trouble seek in vain for that satisfaction, which this

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poor fellow is already arrived at without so much ado? It is better by far to have none of these longings, than to take such pains, and perhaps without any fruit, to give them contentment. If we should have all that our desires crave, yet it is a shorter way to make us happy, to be without them. For why do we desire those pleasures or honours so inordinately? Is it not for the satisfaction and joy which we expect to meet with in them? But that we may have sooner, if we can be rid of those desires. Especially since by wanting them the soul hath leave to fill itself with better pleasures: such pleasures as we cannot desire, but we shall have them; and which we cannot have, but we shall be filled; and which by filling of us do only more enlarge our souls that we may receive a greater fulness.

But there is something still more considerable in those words of Jesus which have occasioned this discourse; for if the propriety of that word be examined, whereby he expresses the condition of the *way*, it doth not seem to signify so much the narrowness of it as the roughness, stoniness, and external difficulties wherewith it is encumbered. There are many afflictions and crosses which may lie in this way; and they deter so much the more delicate sort, that they seem to be the greatest rub they meet withal, and the strongest objection which they make against what I have said of the pleasure of these paths. But let me tell you, that if you imagine it to be far more pleasant to live after the flesh than to take up your cross and follow Christ in his sufferings, there is not a grosser error that can possess your mind. For *he was made perfect through sufferings:* and *there was a joy set before him, which made him endure the cross*[b]*:* and his followers bid us also *rejoice, inasmuch as we are partakers of the sufferings of Christ; that, when his glory shall be revealed, we may be glad also with exceeding joy.* Nay, for the present they say we shall feel ourselves *happy if we be reproached for the name of Christ; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon us*[c]. It is a most heroic and divine temper of mind which expresses itself in meek and cheerful suffering. Then we have opportunity to use the most glorious virtues: then those graces of God shine

[b] [Heb. ii. 10; xii. 2.] [c] 1 Pet. iv. 13, 14.

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most illustriously, which else would be obscured. And therefore one of these great souls cries out and says, *Behold, we count them happy which endure*[d]. The bravest men that ever the world bred were of the mind that there were no joys comparable to those which are proper to courageous and patient virtue. It was impossible to gratify them more, you could not lay an higher obligation upon them, than if you presented them with an occasion to show their constancy, their faith, and their valour. You know who he was that *refused to be called the son of a king's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he had respect to the recompense of reward*[e]. Nay, I have learnt thus much from heathens themselves (for I do not think them unfit for any converse), that it is necessary for good men to enter into agonies and conflicts[f]. They are in need of something or other to combat withal; and therefore afflictions and troubles are the antagonists of virtuous souls, without whom they could not be lawfully crowned. The generosity then of Christian religion, I am sure, is such that it will make you welcome crosses, and stretch out your arms to receive them with more resolution and cheerfulness than ever pagans did. You have been a school-boy, it is like, in your time; and then you could not but hear, as well as I, the story of Ulysses: how he was persecuted at home and abroad; how he encountered giants, barbarous and inhospitable people; how he was in danger of witchcraft and enchantments; underwent cold winters, shipwrecks, and beggary, being forced to wander about in rags. And I can receive no other account of all this from the wise men of those days, but that he being a good man, God was pleased, in mere love and friendship to him, thus to exercise and try his virtue, proposing him as an example of the contentment which both God himself, and virtuous souls, do take in their enduring the hardships which Heaven lays upon them. And what do they say, think you, of that great man Hercules, the beginning of whose story you heard before? They tell us

[d] Jam. v. 11. [e] Hebr. xi. 25, 26.
[f] Max. Tyr. [Dissert. iii. § 6. tom. i. p. 38.]

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that he was beloved of God, and had the highest place in his favour; nay, they call him his son, and say that God committed to him the government of the world. And yet he was always assaulted with some monster or other, and God would not suffer his own child (as one of them speaks) to be nursed up in idleness and the delicacies of life. No, he fought with lions, and boars, and serpents, and tyrants, and thieves; and he was appointed to travel into strange lands, to cross dangerous seas, and to go through terrible wildernesses and deserts; and all to testify the favour of Heaven to him that would thus employ him. No doubt his father could have freed him from such conflicts, but he would not; because (as they render the reason) it is not lawful for him to will any thing but that which is best and most excellent. Or he might have freed himself, and perhaps some men would have advised him to flee these dangers, and rather to quit his place than expose his life to so many hazards. But they knew not the pleasure which he found in his heart, when he remembered that he was thought worthy by God to be singled out to be his champion; and that Heaven had not an ill opinion of him, nor judged him a weak and effeminate person. It was a strange contentment also to image that all these dangers presented themselves only that he might overcome them; and he felt that there was not half so much pains in fighting as there was pleasure in the very hopes of having the victory: nay, if he had perished in the encounter, so he had carried victory out of the world with him, he would have thought himself crowned with an high satisfaction; he would have thought that he died more happily than cowards live, and that it was more glorious thus to end his days than to spin them out basely to the longest age. Besides, herein there being so considerable a proof of the sincerity and fidelity of such persons unto God, it cannot but please them very much to reflect upon it. It yields them a great joy to remember that they have his approbation, and that, after many fiery trials, he finds that they are not endued with a counterfeit virtue. Nay, it is some joy to think that their enemies judge them so considerable as to raise such mighty forces against them, and fight so many battles with them: they assure them hereby that they are more in their account than they could wish; and that power which gave them a shock, but could not

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shake them, doth demonstrate the solidity of their souls, and the great strength they have to resist such forcible impressions.

I do not know whether it be a tale or no, but I have been told, that among other ways, the queen of Sheba tried the wisdom of Solomon[g] by offering certain boys and girls to be distinguished one from the other by him, when they were put into the very same garb, and had been taught the same gestures and carriage of their bodies: and that he, calling for some cold water, commanded them all to wash themselves. Into which the youths plunging their hands boldly, and then rubbing their faces very hard, and the others tenderly dipping their fingers, and only sleeking their faces over with it, he soon discerned the difference, and separated them according to their sexes. Hardships will make a true proof of the strength and masculine force of our spirits. Prosperity (as a wise man of later times observes[h]) doth best discover vice, and adversity makes the best discovery of virtue. And as the one is not without many fears and distastes, so the other is not without its hopes and comforts: of which this is not the least, that God thinks us worthy to be the men in whom he would make an experiment, what Christian souls are able to suffer. The virtue of prosperity is temperance, and the virtue of adversity is fortitude; which in the account of all the world is the more heroical of the two, and yields the greatest triumphs. Nay, he fears not to say, that prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament, and adversity is the blessing of the New, which carries the greater benediction, and the clearer revelation of God's favour. And therefore do not take that ill, which to such a man as you is a mark of the divine love. Be not unwilling that God should do you an honour, and bestow upon you a

[g] [Cedrenus, Compend. Hist. in Corp. Hist. Byzant. tom. viii. p. 77.]

[h] ["Prosperity is not without many fears and distastes; and adversity is not without some comforts and hopes. We see in needle-works and embroideries, it is more pleasing to have a lively work upon a sad and solemn ground, than to have a dark and melancholy work upon a lightsome ground: judge therefore of the pleasure of the heart by the pleasure of the eye. Certainly virtue is like precious odours, most fragrant when they are incensed or crushed: for prosperity doth best discover vice, but adversity doth best discover virtue."—Bacon, Essay V. Of Adversity. Works, vol. i. p. 16.

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blessing. Let him have the pleasure of seeing you behave yourself gallantly. Deny him not that spectacle which is not to be had in heaven, and for which he manifested himself in flesh. Let it not repent him of his choice, if he pick out you for some notable combat. The general appoints the stoutest men for the hardest services. And they do not say, he bears an ill will to us, and owes us a spite; but he hath an high opinion of us, and intends to do us credit. Do you now issue forth with an heart full of the same thoughts, and take my word you shall never want the noblest pleasures. You will thank God for placing you in the foremost rank of Christian soldiers. You will praise him for esteeming a poor pilgrim capable of such achievements. You will rejoice to see yourself herein preferred before the angels: for if they can do more than you, yet you can suffer more than they. Nay, you will find yourself in the fellowship of the Son of God, who was never so glorious as when he hung upon the cross; never triumphed so much as when he seemed to be trampled under feet; and then spoiled principalities and powers, when he was robbed of all, and lost even life itself.

CHAP. XXV.

How the pilgrim and his guide parted. And with what a brave resolution he began his journey.

When the good father (for so we will hereafter call him) had said those words, with some other to the same effect, he told him, that now he thought it would be an injurious act to hinder him any longer by his discourses from going to prove the truth of what had been said. If I am a Mercury, (continued he with a little smile,) as you have been pleased to fancy, I may have leave to make use of my wings and fly away. There remains nothing now to be done, but that which I cannot do for you; and the greatest courtesy that is left in my power is to keep you no longer from doing it yourself. Whereupon, after he had exhorted him briefly to *be strong in the grace of Jesus Christ*, and to *endure hardship as a good soldier of his*, he bade him heartily farewell, and put himself into a posture of departing. But the pilgrim being sorely afflicted within him-

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self at this news, suddenly caught hold of his garment, which gently moved towards him as he turned about; and in a contest between joy and grief, uttered these words, as well as those passions would give him leave. Let me entreat you, dear sir, to prolong your patience so far, as before you go away to receive my thanks for the good directions you have furnished me withal, and to give your blessing likewise upon a poor heart that is resolved, by the help of heaven, instantly to set forth in this way which you have described. If I had been born your son, I could not have thought my obligations greater to you than now I feel them. Nay, I shall take the liberty to say, that I stand more indebted to your piety than I do to nature. For fancy ofttimes makes parents, but it is only reason, truth and goodness which have tied my heart to you. And therefore since I am the issue of your mind, you may justly expect a greater reverence, love, and obedience to your commands than if I was the issue of your body. I have heard your discourse, sir, with great attention: I have marked every particular passage of it with diligence and care; and such a gust hath every word given me which dropped from your mouth, that it hath seemed to me not many minutes long. It is not to be expressed how your golden sentence pleaseth me, which you have put into my mouth. I am resolved to go along this journey, chanting it continually, with no less delight than the birds are wont to do their melodies. Nay, I cannot forbear, (and be not weary, I beseech you, sir, if I hold you longer than I thought,) but I must here, before you, renounce my own proper will, and protest that I desire nothing but to be what Jesus would have me, and to be where Jesus, you say, will bring me. O thou enemy of God, my self-will, that hast reigned so long, come down from thy throne. I proclaim war against thee, and am resolved from this day forward to oppose all thy desires. I set myself here in open defiance to thee; I will have no peace with thee for one moment; because thou art no friend of God, to whom I now deliver myself. Let him be pleased to come and reign in my heart, for I am absolutely his. May it be his will to accept of a poor slave, that devotes all his powers to his service. This I will beg of him perpetually, that he would vouchsafe to let me know what his will is; and that shall be my guide, though my own will be never so desirous to hold a con-

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trary course. Let it pain me, or let it please me, I am resolved to bind myself fast to God, that he may carry me not whither I would, but whither himself thinks good. Say the word, O my God, and it is enough: I am prepared to be conducted by thee. Lead me whither thou wilt, O thou blessed Providence, thou shalt have a faithful follower of thy wise counsels. I am no longer afraid of any dangers. Those terrible monsters, Poverty, Reproach, and all the rest, do strike no dread at all into me. Farewell offices and honours, if you must be the recompense of crimes. Farewell my friends, if I must be the companion of your sins. Farewell all the world, if it must be the price of my soul. But as for you, sir, I am loath to bid you farewell. I must be snatched, rather than go from your company. For you are my father, my oracle, a messenger sent from God to bring me to him. And if you will go to heaven without me, I pray you once more to receive my acknowledgments, which testify that I would thank you if I were able, both for your former directions and for this patience.

Truly (replied the father) I think myself rather obliged to thank you most heartily that you would come to me, and, being come, that you would hear me not only with patience but acceptance: for there is nothing I am so greedy of as to meet with a soul that is sincerely desirous to know the way to Jerusalem; neither do I know any pleasure equal to that of pouring out my heart into such thirsty minds, unless it be this of seeing them relish those waters of life which flow from Wisdom's lips. And that same Jesus, who, I see, hath touched your heart already with his love, and excited you to take this journey, give you his blessing, and send his Spirit the Comforter to accompany you in your travels, and assign you to some good angel of his that may conduct you to that happy place, the heavenly Jerusalem, where he lives: in the way to which I am so desirous you should enter, that I will not be your hinderance by any further discourses; but shall be very glad, as I told you, to find you in safety arrived there, where we shall never part more, nor have any cause to say this sad word, Farewell.

Must I part then with you, said the pilgrim?——Here he made a pause, and tears spoke the rest of his mind; for I could

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hear never a word he said, till, after a great many sighs, he thus proceeded: Well, let it be so. It is part of my duty, you say, to be contented with every thing; and therefore I now freely resume my former resolution, and say, in the words (I hope in the spirit also) of Jesus, *Not my will, O Lord, but thy will be done.* Only let me again renew my desires that you would accompany me ever with your good prayers; for I hope it is not too great a gratification of myself to be pleased in your friendship, and in the belief that you remember me: nor will it be accounted a crime that I am not willing to be left out of your thoughts, especially when they are addressed in devout supplications to Jesus. I have been long persuaded that I use to prosper the better in all my designs for the good wishes of pious persons; and it hath been some support to me also, when I have had no great store of good desires in my own heart, or been but cold in those I had, to think that the concerns of my soul were presented to God by some friend or other in their more fervent devotions. And therefore it will be at the most but a pardonable error, if I do with some passion beg the prayers of such a person as you are, and if I comfort myself sometimes with the interest I have in you and them: especially since I see by your charitable instructions, and the patience you have used towards me, that you have an heart so full of love and goodness, that it will neither suffer you to remember me coldly, nor to be weary in recommending me to the grace of God.

The father would not make any long reply to these words, for fear they should never break off, but be always linked together by the chains of this pleasing conversation, and the delight which he perceived began to spring up in him by the interchanging so many expressions of their mutual love. But after he had assured him by a solemn promise that he would never fail to commend him to the love and care of Jesus, they took their leave one of the other, not without a great many embraces, and hearty wishes to see each other again in peace at Jerusalem.

You may be sure the pilgrim could not but often reflect with a sad heart upon this dear person, whose counsels he

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carried along with him in his breast; and, while the image of him was so fresh in his mind, it did not a little wound him that he could enjoy no more than that shadow of his friend. Sometimes he complained of the imperfections of this state, and the miseries of the world, that will not let those who love most be most together. Sometimes he blamed his own unworthiness, which made such a felicity as the constant company of so good a man too great for him to possess. Sometimes he called him back, and wished in his heart that he would return. And by and by he was ready to follow after him, and thought he could fly presently into his embraces, so strong were the desires he felt of being with him. But in the midst of these restless thoughts, which for a little space were tossed up and down in his mind, it pleased God to remember him of the vow he had made of his will to him. He put him in mind that he stood still all this while, though he was in so great an agitation, and that to follow his friend would be to go back from his resolution; and that he had more than the image of his body to bear him company, there being left behind the very picture of his soul described in those directions which he had bestowed upon him. Such thoughts as these put away that fit of passion wherein he was engaged, and caused the qualm that went over his heart to vanish. So that now, loosened from all the world (as he thought), he blessed himself, and, without any discomposure, took his staff in his hand, and said: From this moment farewell all my former enjoyments: do not trouble me; for I now begin my designed pilgrimage. I AM NOUGHT, I HAVE NOUGHT, I DESIRE NOUGHT BUT TO BE WITH JESUS AT JERUSALEM.

CHAP. XXVI.

Of sundry troubles which happened to the pilgrim in his travels; and how he was delivered out of them.

A FINE sunshine morning it was when he first went out of his doors: the air was perfumed with the sweet odours which the sun exhaled from the flowers; the birds whistled and sung their hymns to him that made that glorious light; and there was no hedge that he passed by but it welcomed him with some new songs and pleasures, nor any traveller he met but

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wished him good speed. He was so much pleased in every thing that he saw and heard; in all the works of God; in his word, which he bare in his mind; in the smoothness of the way; in the remembrance of the father he left; in the assurance he had of his prayers, and such like things; that he never thought himself at home till now that he had no home at all, but was seeking one. He could do nothing but compose praises to God; nothing but laud the name of Jesus, that had brought him into so happy a condition: and by his good will he would have made this the business of all the day, to sing a certain ditty, the beginning and the end of which (I remember) was nothing but this, *Bless the Lord, O my soul.* Whether it was the novelty of those objects that presented themselves, or the greatness and beauty of them, or the good society he met withal, or an immediate touch from that Spirit which the good man prayed might be his companion, or all these, or any other thing, that made him so merry, I had not leisure to examine; but he was never known in all his life to have expressed so much contentment in any condition, as in this pilgrimnge wherein he was engaged to Jerusalem.

Yet he had not passed many weeks in these rapturous joys (for they were little less), before he found them so much abated that he thought himself less happy than he imagined. The ways were grown a little more rugged, the heaven began to be overcast, and the country through which he went was more barren, and yielded not those fruits which he had before tasted; which, together with other things, cast him into a damp, and procured to his soul more sadness than he used to be acquainted withal. At the first, indeed, he was only moved to some wonderment to find such an alteration, and thought that in half a day's travel, or such a space, he should recover more pleasant paths. But when he found, contrary to his expectation, that they still continued uneasy, and likewise chanced to see some of his old companions, who called to him at some distance, and persuaded him to go back again, he was much affrighted, and began to feel wild imaginations roving about his soul, and strange desires of quitting a course which was like to prove so ungrateful to that part of him which was most concerned in the things of this world. For it was repre-

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sented to his thoughts, that the ensuing part of the road was very dangerous, beset with thieves, and many difficulties, tedious, and of a strange length; and, besides that he might be in a wrong way, it was very doubtful whether there was such a place or no as he fancied, seeing nobody had been there. From all which, and many other considerations, they told him it was most advisable, if he consulted his own peace, to return with them to his former habitation, and his ancient neighbours, who were all very sorry to hear that he had quit his present possessions, in they knew not what hopes of getting better at a place which neither he nor any of his friends had seen.

But though this push, by the unexpectedness of it, made him reel and stagger a little, yet he soon recollected himself; and, calling to mind what he had been taught, and repeating that charm (as I may call it) which he always had about him, I am naught, I have naught, &c., he found himself as firm in his resolution as if he had not been at all assaulted. Shall I forsake my Lord (said he to himself) so soon as ever I have begun his service? Is it handsome for me to recoil, merely from the noise and report of dangers? What a coward shall I for ever hold myself, if I run away before my enemies be in view, upon a rumour of their strength and power! I will march up towards them, and, at least, look them in the face. I will not trust this fame which all the world hath branded for a liar: since common observation also tells us that the lion is not so terrible as he is painted. Much more he spake to this effect, which moved him to a kind of indignation against himself, that he should so much as shrink back thus early, before sufficient trial, and upon such slight information.

And yet it was not at all to his disadvantage that he had felt this shock, but it rather had many happy effects upon him: like a fit or two of an ague, which is thought rather wholesome than to deserve the name of a disease. For, as it gave him more understanding in the nature of his way, (of the smoothness of which, notwithstanding all that had been said, he too much presumed,) and made him watchful because he saw he could not pass without some enemies; so it gave him some degree of courage, because he perceived they might be

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overcome, and confirmed his belief of the wisdom of his director, who foretold these troubles; and gave a proof withal of the efficacy of that remedy which he had prescribed, and, above all, revived that joy and gladness in his heart which he thought began to languish and faint away. Full of joy he was even to an excess, and he suffered by it a kind of transportation; partly from the brightness of the truths he had received, which yet were fresh in his mind, partly from the increase of his understanding by the experiment which he had made; but chiefly, I think, from the victory which he had obtained over those enemies that attacked his soul. For, in truth, there is no greater triumph than that which the soul feels when it comes off a conqueror, and applauds itself for the valour and courage which it hath expressed in its conflicts. There was another thing indeed which added something, though not much, to his joy, viz. that his enemies, he hoped, had received such a foil, that he had sent them away discouraged, if not disabled from making any further attempts upon him.

But so mutable is our condition here, and so many are our enemies, that he had not travelled many days after this triumph before he was arrested with a new trouble to exercise his wisdom and patience. His soul, which just now was ready to leap out of his body, he felt to sink so low, that it was as if he had no soul at all. His spirits not only began to flag and hang down their heads, but were grown quite faint and weary, as if they meant to swoon away. Which was partly occasioned by his going too fast and taking over-long journeys; and partly by a very hot day, when the sun beat very strongly upon his head; and partly by the very violence of his joys, which stirred his spirits so much, that in the agitation they flew away; and partly by letting slip two or three of those instructions which had been left with him, which should have been a cordial to him, but were as impossible, he found, to be by any means recalled, as it was to bring back his tired spirits which were flown from him. Very melancholy and sad he now began to be, and the more because he had been so joyful. O how desolate (said he within himself) is this place into which I am fallen! I am forsaken, sure, of God, or else I that was so high yesterday should never have sunk into this pit, which is

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next door to the dwelling of damned spirits. Was ever any man in such a deplorable estate? Was there ever any bereaved thus of all his comforts which should sweeten his way when he had no other company? Oh, who will restore unto me the days that are past? Who can call back but the joys of yesterday into my bosom? What are those sins that have cast me into the displeasure of my Lord? Or, what shall I do to regain his favour, which I would purchase at any rate, though I died the next moment? Thus he lay many days, sometimes bewailing his former affrightment, which he suspected might deserve this desertion, (as he was apt to call it,) sometimes complaining that he could not find the cause, and so could not be cured; sometimes reflecting on the times of joy which were gone, and sometimes taking a view of his misery, which made him but the more deeply miserable. And, which was worst of all, he kept his bed all this time, and stirred not a foot in his journey; being indeed so ill that he despaired of life.

But see how the providence of God watches for an opportune season to do us a kindness. When he was in the greatest torture that he had felt all the time of this agony, there came an unexpected letter to his hands from his beloved father, which was to this effect.

"My friend, (for so I cannot but call you, since you express such love to me,) these are to let you know, that though I am absent from you, yet I follow you with my thoughts and good wishes, which attend you in all your motions. I am so far from being forgetful of my promise, that I am much better, I assure you, than my word. You desire me to pray for you, and so I do. But I cannot content myself with that, unless you, as well as God, know that I have a remembrance of you. That is the very reason of my sending this paper after you, that it may be a token how regardful I am of your concerns, and solicitous about your welfare: so solicitous, that, having enjoyed some good thoughts this morning, I could not but impart them unto you, because I fancied they would prove, upon some occasion or other, very useful to you. They are a meditation upon one of the Psalms of David, where he bids his soul

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not to be disquieted, but to hope in God as the health of his countenance and his God: and they are enfolded in a distinct paper within the bosom of this letter, because they were too long to be inserted in the body of it.

"FAREWELL."

Upon the very first receipt of this letter, before he had broke it up, his pale cheeks began to be streaked with a little blood, as a prognostic of his recovery to health again. But when he opened it, and read the kind expressions of the love of his friend, one might see how the spirits crept up, as he went along, out of the centre whither they were retired: in so much that the light danced in his eyes, yea, leaped out, as if it meant to kiss those lines which now saluted them. But then, as soon as he arrived at the meditation itself, and had carefully perused all the parts of it, his face shined like an angel, and one would have thought he had not been the man that was so lately dejected. For it was so pat to his present condition, and so exactly suited to the necessities under which he laboured, that it seemed as if it had been indicted by God and not by his friend. There he found a discourse of the nature of joy, of the causes of its decay, of the interest that our animal spirits have in it, of the way to recover it, and the means to be content without it; and, above all, of the resignation of ourselves to the will of God, to serve him cheerfully without those sensible pleasures as well as in their company. And not to name other things which were more fully debated between them afterward, these now rehearsed were so fully opened, that he was partly amazed and partly elevated to the height of his joys again, when he thought that God had put it into the heart of the father to send at this time a letter of such comfortable import unto him. I see, said the pilgrim, that not my friend only, but Jesus also is mindful of me. I see both that he prays for me, and that Heaven likewise hears those prayers. It would be an unsufferable wrong to my blessed Saviour should I hereafter think my soul forsaken of him. Nay, it will be an ill-requital of the favour he hath now done me, should I not resume my ancient joyfulness again. And therefore be no longer disquieted, O my soul, be not cast down within me. It is not in vain to hope in God, but in that very

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hope thou mayest be joyful; and therefore, in the fruition of thy expectations, O how greatly oughtest thou to rejoice! *Light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart*[i]. *They that know thy name will put their trust in thee, for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee*[k]. And therefore I cannot but say, *Wait on the Lord, be of courage, and he shall strengthen thy heart: wait, I say, on the Lord*[l]. *I will sing unto the Lord, because he hath dealt bountifully with me*[m]. *Yea, I will hope continually, and will yet praise him more and more*[n].

Many other the like effusions of his heart one might then have heard, and they lasted so many days, that they became instrumental to the redeeming much of that time which had been lost in fruitless complaints upon his bed. He did not go so fast as he was wont, but he went much further than before in the same number of hours. His joys were not so violent, but they became more sweet, and they grew more equal. He could not recover yet the memory of some things he had received; but this he better understood, that he must desire nought but Jesus: he was not so full of heat, but his light was more resplendent: he did not expect now to be always in the same temper, yet he was confident he should never more suspect the love of his Saviour: he perceived that he could not ever retain the same joys, yet he learnt withal that the way to have them sooner restored was not to fret for want of them.

But though in this condition he made a great progress in his way towards the holy city of God, yet the light which was in his mind did not cast such a splendour about his soul but that one day he suffered some obscurity. The occasion of it was a cloudy thought which came over his understanding, suggesting to him that he did not serve God purely enough, because his eye was too much upon Jerusalem. For it had been commonly received for a truth among some persons whom he had formerly conversed withal, that we must obey God out of mere love to him, without any hope of rewards at all. This, you will say, was a

[i] Ps. xcvii. 11. [k] ix. 10. [l] xxvii. 14. [m] xiii. 6. [n] lxxi. 14.

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strange conceit, and it had as strange a cure. For it pleased God that he opening a book which he carried along with him, the next morning after these thoughts troubled him, the first thing that he cast his eye upon was this passage in a certain chapter of it, that Moses *had respect to the recompense of reward*[m]. You cannot think how much it surprised him that he should light upon these words rather than any other without his choice, or so much as a design to receive satisfaction in this particular. And yet that which I am next to relate was more wonderful in his eyes, and made him stand in a greater astonishment at the goodness of God towards him. For it being suggested to him from the memory of some fragments of certain sermons which he once heard, that Moses and those under the law, who were but bondmen, might have respect to rewards, but that it did not become those who had *the spirit of adoption*[n] to be so mercenary, and, he being a little perplexed with this trifling objection, it happened, that looking down upon the same page of his book again, his eye fell directly upon the second verse of the next chapter, which told him, that *Jesus endured the cross for the joy that was set before him*[o]. The first glance which he had of this place was like a beam of the sun in his eye, which immediately dispelled all his darkness, and made his soul flash out in such expressions as these: Who are these men that are wiser than Jesus? What mean these dreamers to fancy themselves above that which was not below our Saviour? Or, how came they to be so proud as to despise the promises of God, and think they stand in no need at all of them? On, my soul, go on, and be not stopped a minute longer by this scruple. Fix thine eyes upon Jerusalem, and let thine heart be ravished with it; for the Mediator of the second covenant, as well as of the first, had a respect unto it.

After he had hit so luckily on these two passages which lay so near together, a great many more of the same kind presented themselves instantly to his mind: not much unlike the beams of the sun, which, having once torn a cloud in sunder, break forth more and more, till the whole body of that great

[m] Heb. xi. 26. [n] [Rom. viii. 15.] [o] [Heb. xii. 2.]

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light appear to us. And this likewise raised his spirits unto some further degree of cheerfulness, when he thought how our Lord still provided for his relief, and took the pains to pull the smallest thorn that troubled him out of his feet. And yet this could not hinder but that they were too much dejected a little after by a company of other petty thoughts; which, like so many importune flies, were always buzzing this new fancy in his ears; that he did not directly intend the glory and honour of Jesus in all his actions. He considered indeed with himself, that he endeavoured to do well, and that he loved to do so; and that he looked upon it as the very life of God; but yet he thought he did not so actually respect him in every particular motion as his duty required. Now here it fell out very happily, and not without a divine Providence, as he thought, that one night being in a dream, he imagined he saw one coming to him, and whisper this sentence in his ear, which of a long time he had not read, *They repented not, to give him glory* [p]. Whereupon starting suddenly out of his sleep as if some good genius had awakened him, and given him a new mind, he presently began to tell himself, that when he first repented, and undertook this new life, he *gave glory to God:* and that by every step he took in this course of repentance (i. e. amending of himself) he did actually honour him, and more materially than any other way glorify his name: for this is a constant acknowledgment of him, a minutely confession that we are fools, and he is wise; that our will is nought, and his is good; that he is our Lord, and we his subjects; and that after all our search we find our happiness to lie in him alone, and in separation from him the best condition in the world will leave us miserable. And he had not long pondered upon these things with much satisfaction, before those words of the Psalmist came into his mind, *He that offereth praise glorifieth me, and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God* [q]. Which made him fall into the praises of God, and to resolve that he would do so every day, and early design all the employments of it to his service: concluding, that whilst he held this course, and ordered his ways aright, he exalted God in the world, by lifting up his will into a preeminence and command over his own, and subjecting himself unto it both as most

[p] Rev. xvi. 9. [q] Psalm l. 23.

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supreme, and also wise and good. And after a great many thoughts of this nature, at last he made a short reflection upon the person who had made him this visit in the night. And when he remembered that he fancied it was his friend who came to his bed-side, he had a new pleasure to think of the benefits of sleep. The praises of which he could not upon this occasion forbear, though at certain times he wished his thoughts might never be intermitted by it. What an heavenly power (said he) is this, for so I am ready to call it! how much am I beholden to it for its silent refreshments! That which useth to part the dearest friends, hath now brought them together. That which separateth those who touch each other, hath made those near who are far asunder. O divine gift! O beloved rest which God bestows upon us! How great are these charms which lock our doors to all the world, and now have opened them to my friend! How much better are these dreams than many of my waking thoughts! How much rather had I be in the arms of the brother of death, than in the feeble enjoyments of many parts of my life! I am content just now to be restored to his embraces, if my friend will but meet me there again in this manner. At least I hope I may conclude that when we are dead indeed, he will not fail to meet me; whose image finds me out when I am in the images of death.

CHAP. XXVII.

How the pilgrim fell into a great sadness; and how strangely it was cured by an unexpected meeting with his guide: who discourses of the nature of sensible joys. And at last upon his desire contracts a particular friendship with the pilgrim.

In such thoughts, or rather dreams as these, he spent a little portion of his time with great delight. And now having vanquished so many enemies and impediments in his way of divers sorts, he was willing to believe that he should be molested no more, but pass in perfect peace to the Vision of Peace. A great many days he remained in these pleasant expectations, and went a good way onwards to his resting place, without the least

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weariness of any part about him. He seldom departed from meditation, but either with his mind illuminated with new light from heaven, or his will inflamed with a new ardour, or his whole heart steeped in new sweetness. And though sundry new enemies also attempted him, yet such a profound peace seemed to have taken possession of his heart, that they could not move the least disturbance there. The joys that he felt made him despise all baits of pleasure which lay in his way. The conquests which he had got made him think himself above the scorn and laughter of the world. And though he was sometimes bitterly reproached, yet he comforted himself with this, that they did but prepare him matter for new triumphs. But he could never be drawn to any other contests wherein the generality of men were then very zealously engaged: nor did he affect any victories among the disputers of the world. He lived in love and peaceableness with all his fellow-travellers. He thought himself so rich also in these graces, that it was no trouble to him to be poor. And he had such a sense from whence he received them, that they were no temptation neither to be proud. But yet for all this it chanced that some exercises of devotion to which he had bound himself being one day omitted, either through indisposition, or by reason of some lawful, if not necessary occasions which diverted him; he was cast into such a pensiveness of mind, as proved at last a great affliction to him. For he indulged to himself those thoughts, because they pleased him at first; but by too frequent reflections they grew to a melancholy mood, and from thence proceeded to a dull and listless temper of spirit. In this condition you must needs think his joys were again abated, which added very much to the trouble of his mind: and indeed they fell in time to so low an ebb, that he feared they would never rise again, but leave him at last quite dry, and without one drop of comfort. And so truly in the issue of things it proved: for as they forsook him, so he was tempted again to forsake his way, which was now become but irksome to him without those refreshments. The pleasure and relish that he was wont to feel in holy duties was quite gone. Instead of clearness there succeeded darkness; dryness of spirit took the place of affection, and in the room of joy and gladness he was loaded with nothing but groans and heaviness. He often professed that he could

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feel nothing at all; but remained as a man that had lost the use of his soul. And therefore, though he continued for a while to pray and perform his duty in other things as well as he could, yet finding that he was but like a man that drinks very much, when the liquor hath no taste, and gives him no pleasure in the going down; he was tempted to throw it all away, and thought he had as good not do those things at all, as do them with no delight. And accordingly he gave up himself wholly to be tortured by his own thoughts, which employed themselves in nothing else but making sad representations of the misery of this state: which you must needs think was so grievous that it was not possible to draw a picture of it. For since the soul is of far greater force than the body, the pains and anguish which arise in it must needs be far more pungent and afflictive than those which touch the outward man. He suffered a kind of martyrdom every day: or rather he was continually crucified, and had nothing but gall and vinegar given him to drink. He thought he had reason when he complained of greater pains than the martyrs endured. For they being inwardly illuminated and touched from heaven, found the highest comforts in their torments, the greatest liberty in their imprisonments, and in the midst of flames the divinest ardours of love in their hearts, which like a greater fire put the other out. But he, poor soul, though always denying his own desires, breaking of his will in pieces, lying upon a rack, and fast nailed to the cross, where the body of sin was bleeding to death; yet found his spirit in horrid torments, and deprived of those divine delights which cheered the bright souls of the blessed martyrs, and made them shine with a greater lustre than did their fires. But since I cannot express the soreness of this agony in which he a long time lay, I shall only add that it was so great, that one day being quite tired and spent, he fell into a kind of trance, and remained as immovable for some space as if he had been dead. And a blessed occasion this was, though all his acquaintance that were come to comfort him imagined he would then have expired. For he thought he saw a man coming to him with a very smiling aspect (as though he knew him), who bade him get up, and go as fast as he could to a certain oratory that was not far off, and in his way, where he should meet with some relief.

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When he was come to himself, he thought this vision (or what else you please to call it) was instead of an oracle, and had discovered to him one of the greatest causes that he continued so long ill of these grievous distempers. And that was, that while he afflicted and tormented himself with the remembrance of what was past, he neglected to implore the help of God with such constant prayers as was meet, for the redress of his present evils, and prevention of the like in time to come. This began to make a vehement commotion in his mind, for he saw there was nothing truer, than that we are apt to pray least when we have greatest need of it, and are wont to spend that time in looking upon our sores, which should be employed in looking up to Heaven for its balm to drop into them. And truly so lively were the colours wherein this was set before his eyes, that he was ready to burst into tears, and pour out his soul there, before he stirred from the bed whereon he lay. But remembering presently the voice (to which he thought himself so much beholden) had bid him make what speed he could to a particular place, where he might address his prayers to his Saviour, he arose and dressed himself without any further delay. And though he knew that our Lord hears the suits of his humble clients every where, yet he would not be disobedient to the directions he had received; but made haste to go and see what good might wait for him in that oratory or chapel which had been built in the road by some charitable person for the use of devout passengers to Jerusalem.

And no sooner had he entered within the doors, but he fell upon his knees, and there sent out his soul in such strong and passionate desires as left all words behind, which were not able to accompany them. If the throng of his thoughts (which upon this occasion were assembled) had not been so great, you might have received a better account of them. But truly such was the violence wherewith they pressed forth, and so great were their numbers, that he found it very difficult either then to range them in any order, or afterward to recall them distinctly to his mind. Yet some of them carried this sense, as I have been certainly informed by him, from whom he hides none of the secrets of his soul.

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O thou almighty Goodness, the Father of the fatherless, the Patron of the poor, the Protector of strangers; cast thy gracious eyes upon a miserable pilgrim, who all torn and ragged implores thy mercy. When I look on myself, I dare scarce be so bold as to lift up mine eyes unto thee. When I think in what condition I am, and what I have done, it so confounds me that I can hardly think of any thing else. It is the greatness of my misery alone that constrains me to this presumption of prostrating myself at thy feet: the weight of which oppresses me so much, that it hath left me little more power than to expose myself before thee as an object of thy wondrous charity. O what a wilderness am I fallen into, where I can find no water! What deserts are these, in which all comfort forsakes my soul! Into what strange regions am I wandered, where there is nothing but darkness and the valleys of the shadow of death! O the terrors that surround me! how dreadful are they! O the affliction and torment which I endure! What tongue can express it? My soul is parched and dried up; my spirits are consumed by the heat of thy displeasure. May I not now beg one drop of comfort from thee?—*O my God, my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and barren land. I remember thy loving-kindness in former times: I call to mind the days of old*[a]: and I cannot but wish at least to see thy power and thy glory so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary. *There is none in heaven that I desire but thee, nor on earth besides thee. My soul followeth hard after thee: O when wilt thou come unto me? O hide not thy face from thy servant, for I am in trouble: hear me speedily. I am poor and needy, make haste unto me, O God: thou art my helper and deliverer; O Lord, make no tarrying*[b]. I am come a great way from all my friends and kindred, and there is none to pity me. *O my God, be not thou far from me: draw nigh unto my soul, and redeem it. I am poor and sorrowful: let thy salvation set me up on high*[c]. For thou who searchest the hearts knowest that I am travelling nowhither but to thee. All the world have I left, that I may find my happiness only in thee. And at thy heavenly motion it was that I undertook this long journey. I am become a

[a] [Psalm lxiii. 1; cxliii. 5.] [b] [Psalm lxxvii. 25; lxiii. 8; ci. 2; lxix. 17; lxx. 5.] [c] [Psalm lxxi. 12; lxix. 18, 29.]

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pilgrim merely in obedience to thy will. Yea, thus far I acknowledge thou hast most graciously conducted me. Hitherto I have been highly favoured and wonderfully helped by thee. And wilt thou now at last abandon me, who have abandoned all things else for the sake of thee? Hast thou called me from mine own country and father's house, that I may perish by famine here, and only for want of thee? O my Lord, give me leave to plead for a soul which once I thought was dear unto thee. Pity, O pity an heart, which thou hast made too great for all the world, and cannot be satisfied with less than thee. Canst thou see it die for lack of one smile from thee? yea, canst thou let it die of love to thee? for that hath brought me thus far to seek thee. And wilt thou suffer it to die at thy feet? Canst thou endure to behold it perish in thy arms, into which it now throws itself with all the force it hath? Shall it miscarry full of prayers and longings after thee? Shall it expire in cries and tears which it pours out for thy mercy? O, where are thy bowels? What are become of thine ancient loving-kindnesses? Are they all forfeited by one offence against thee? O my God, I cannot think so hardly of thee. I begin to live methinks, because thou permittest these addresses to thee. It inspires me with some hopes to find these holy breathings in me. It rejoices me much that I feel thee drawing my very heart after thee. O take it, I beseech thee, take it quite away from me unto thyself. Shape it after thine own heart, and make it such as thou canst embrace. *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew in me a right spirit. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit*[d].

He was proceeding in the words of that penitential psalm, being once got into it; but that a flood of tears stopped the passage of his words, and sighs and groans supplied their place. In which having vented himself a while, it fell out that the tide of his passion being a little fallen, and his sighs growing something silent, he should hear the voice of another person that was drowned before in his louder cries, which invited him first to listen and then to cast his eyes, as wet as they

[d] [Psalm li. 10—12.]

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were, that way from whence it came to his ears. And so turning his head a little aside, whom should he espy in this oratory but the good man from whom he had taken his first directions, who being himself also a traveller to Jerusalem, called in at this place to refresh himself, and to take such a repast as the bounty of Heaven was wont here to provide. He scarce knew at the first whether he might believe his eyes or no, and when he had satisfied himself that it was no dream, he was still in some doubt whether he should rise from his knees and go to salute him. Two passions he felt struggling in him at the same point of time: the one transported him to the father, with whom he already fancied himself; and the other held him where he was, that he might make an end of his prayers to God. But finding at last that his spirits began to fail him, and that he knew not well what to add at present to his former devotions, withal hoping that God had sent his director at this happy moment to teach him to pray better; he went without any further deliberation, and threw himself into the arms of the father, as soon as he saw that he was at leisure to receive him.

The good old man was as much surprised with the strangeness of this accident as the pilgrim could be. But when all other passions had spent themselves which use to be moved on such unexpected occasions, they left joy in the sole possession of his heart, which could not but stay there a great while, having so many causes to excite it. It was no small pleasure to see his son (as he could not but esteem him) after so long absence. Friends never part with so much sadness, but they meet again with as great a joy. But then to meet him when he thought not of it, and to meet him in so good a place, and to find him so far advanced in his way to Jerusalem, and also to hear him so fervently desire to be carried further; these things made his joy exceed and boil up to a greater height. I will not recite what he said unto him, and indeed it was not much, because the young pilgrim, though wonderfully enlivened by the sight of the father, yet could not so disguise his soul, but that it left some deadness in his countenance. The joys and pleasing raptures into which he was cast at this interview were not so bright, but that there remained some clouds upon his face which could not be dispelled by them. This

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made the good man very abruptly to break off his speech as soon as he had entered into it, and it abated also a little of his satisfaction when he saw by the paleness of his cheeks and the dulness of his eyes that all was not well with him.

Yet there was no need to ask what he ailed; for he had no sooner told the father what joy he conceived in his presence, but he was ready to unbosom the grief of his heart to him, thinking to find some ease, both by discharging his soul into that breast, and by receiving it back again better informed in all its concernment. Many things he related to him; but above the rest, I remember, he insisted upon his present dulness, and the loss of those joys that were wont to attend him, which he had no means left to recover, unless he was now sent by God to restore them. And all the time of his speech on this argument he looked so sorrowfully, that it would have moved an heart most void of compassion to behold him. His words, likewise, were all uttered with mournful accents, and not without the addition of some tears, though he endeavoured as much as he could to restrain them, lest they should hinder all his mind from coming forth: which when he had sighed out with a great deal of passion, it was not possible so to repress them but that all concluded in a plentiful shower.

At the end of which, he being very silent, the father thus addressed his speech to him. And is this all you have to say against yourself? Then you may wipe your eyes, and look more cheerfully; for you are not so ill as I see you imagine. You are more afraid than hurt; and, unless you will be your own tormenter, there is nothing appears that can disturb your repose. Did you not write me word that you received much satisfaction in this very case by a letter that I happily sent unto you? Did not my instructions before your setting out bid you expect some cloudy weather in your travels? I thought you would have understood by those discourses that we must not expect always the same joys and consolations in such a variety of tempers as we now suffer, nor the same vigour and activity of spirit, while we are so fast chained to this flesh as our present state will have us. Did I not bid you also say perpetually, I AM NOUGHT, I HAVE NOUGHT, &c.? and did you not find this a most effectual spell to drive away all these black

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and dismal thoughts? Why then did you think yourself worthy at all times to enjoy these pleasures? Why did you not abase yourself at the feet of your Saviour, and confess to him that these are too great favours to be indulged constantly to us on this side of our resting-place? If there be any way to have them it is this, not to expect them, and acknowledge that we do not deserve them. Nay, in those submissions and devolutions of ourselves before our Lord there is no small satisfaction; unless it be no pleasure to be united to his will, which is inseparably united to the highest pleasures. You must give me leave to wonder a little that you should be so forgetful. And I must tell you, it was very misbecoming your condition to take it ill that you were not treated ever since I left you according to your own desires. Might it not have satisfied your mind to find yourself in the direct way to abiding and never-fading joys? Could you not have thought it happiness enough to look for perfect peace and repose at last in Jerusalem? nay, might it not seem very reasonable for a sinner to submit to so small a punishment (if you will have it so termed) as to travel sometimes in a rainy day? What arrogance is this, that we who have so oft offended should take offence if we be remembered of it! But that which seems more strange to me than any thing else is, that after you had resigned yourself to your Saviour's will in this particular, you should fall into the same trouble, if not fault, again. You have taught me this by it, that I must expect to find my patients afflicted with the same disease which I had cured, and persecuted with the same scruples which they themselves had satisfied: for else you, that travelled through a sandy and barren desert once before, would not have been so dejected at the sight of a new one; and when you could find no water in it, you would have refreshed your thoughts, as you were wont to do, with the remembrance of Jerusalem.

But, that I may never find you cast upon your bed by a relapse into this sickness any more, let me give you a larger account of these joys, the want of which hath been so grievous to you. I remember once that I met with a man that thought he wanted not above two or three steps of the gate of Jerusalem (though afterward I much questioned whether he knew any thing of the place), yea, that imagined himself now and

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then to be caught up into paradise. He was angelical in his discourse, and more than angelical in his own conceit; for he spoke of nothing but ecstasies and raptures, and such like things, that are by some men much exalted above the trifles (as they esteem them) of obedience. I endeavoured to learn of him what might be the ground of such an high confidence of his nearness to God; and all that he was able to tell me amounted to no more but this, that he was so full of joy, that his soul was ready to burst its prison, and escape to heaven. Now, though you are not of this enthusiastical temper, yet perhaps you think there are no finer or more desirable things than these joys for heaven to bestow upon you, judging of their worth and the divineness of them by the delight wherewith they entertain you. But I must teach you another lesson, and instruct you to set a price upon them by another measure, and that is, the good they make you do. If these joys do not spur you to obedience, and make you fruitful in every good work, they are not of such value as you imagine; and if, in the absence of them, you mind your duty and do the will of God, it is as well, if not better, because you do the same that you did before, only you have less encouragement to do it.

Nay, more than this, I must let you know that these are things which God bestows upon the most imperfect souls, who are not as yet able to go, but only to creep, in the way to heaven. They are the sweet milk which he sends us out of his breasts when we are as yet but babes, and in the infancy of religion. He consults our weakness in these gifts; and considers that as a child, while it wants teeth and strength to feed itself, must be nourished with milk, so the soul, till it be able to understand the gospel, and feed upon the solid truths thereof, must be entertained a while with this thinner diet, which is most agreeable to its affectionate part. And withal he provides hereby that the heart which hath left the pleasures of the world may not be discouraged at the first entrance into his ways for want of some other pleasures; which it cannot well be without, because it hath been so long used to them, and which it cannot yet find in religion itself, because that is a thing of which it hath but a very childish understanding.

And can you think now that God is not good to such a per-

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son as you, who have been so long a servant to him? You see he is so far from letting grown souls be without comfort, that it is a thing he doth not deny to the most puling creatures, and those who are but novices in the spiritual life. Or, do you think that he loves those best to whom he grants this kind of consolation? I might as well imagine that the gardener which I passed by the other day in my travels loved the young plants best which brought him no profit, because I observed him to water and fence and underprop those tender things; whilst he exercised no such care about the well-grown trees, which used to load themselves and him every year with their fruit. Alas! it is their weakness that requires this attendance upon them; and God pours these things upon imperfect souls, when others have none of them, not because he loves them more, but because they have more need. So, you remember, your mother used to deal with your little infant sister, to swaddle her, and dandle her, and kiss her, and sing to her, and find out a thousand little toys to please her; when you were left to dress yourself, and study better satisfaction, which yielded you the more pleasure, because you contributed something by your own labour to the finding of them. For the love of God, let us not accuse him in this fashion of unkindness, nor fancy that he frowns and scowls upon us, because we have not those smiles with which in our feeble age he was wont to look upon us and cherish us. You are past these things, and want nothing but this understanding to make you a grown man in Christ Jesus.

But consider, I beseech you, do you not feel him do far better things for you than all the joys that ever you had amount unto? He feeds you, perhaps, with harder meat than milk, but it gives you more nourishment and greater strength; with more spirit and vivacity also, if heartily embraced. Do you not understand more by a thousand parts than formerly you did? Are you not able with greater constancy to beat off all temptations of the flesh and the world? Have you not your passions in a better command? And are not your faith and hope more rational things, so that you are able to render to anybody an intelligent account of them? Be contented then; for what greater thing can God do for you than to make you wise and holy as he himself is? No man would have reason to thank God more than you, if you would but understand this,

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among the rest of the truths which (blessed be his name) you are well acquainted withal, that it is no sign God doth not love you when you are not transported with sensible joys; and that your passions, which are otherwise quiet, ought not to be disturbed for want of them. There is no cause, I assure you, that they should; for it will not be demanded at the last day what comforts you have enjoyed, but rather what discomforts you have suffered without failing in your duty or slacking your obedience.

You have heard, I believe, very often the story of the Prodigal Son, who, having wasted all his patrimony in riotous courses, yet returning to his father, was received with such joy, as was to the admiration of those who knew not the reason of it. He caused him to be clothed with the best suit of apparel that was in his wardrobe; he made him a present of a ring to assure him of his affection; there was a great feast prepared; there was nothing but music, and singing, and dancing to be heard; and we may very well think that he also gave him many embraces now that he was at home, who had met him with so much passion when he was yet afar off. And yet, at the same time, he had another son that was both elder and more dutiful; one that had never forsaken him, that had served him many years, that had never offended him in word or deed; for whom there was no such cheer provided. But, would you have joined with this elder brother in his complaints, (if you had been present at such a meeting,) because he was not treated after this fashion? Would you have judged it very unreasonable that a person of greater desert should have no such banquet made to entertain him? Or, would you have concluded that the father had more love for this dissolute youth than for so staid and sober a man as he that always obeyed him? It is possible you might have run into this mistake, till you had heard the father say, My son, thou art always with me, and all that I have is thine; and then you would not have had a word to reply, unless it had been a great many thanks for the high esteem that he had of him. You may easily apply all this to yourself, and, considering that you are now grown up in the love of God, and enriched with the knowledge of Christ, and possessed of so many heavenly virtues, not expect to be caressed in the same manner as the

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younger children are, nor repine for the want of that comfort of which you are able, by the grace of God, to provide yourself other ways. Your eyes are enlightened to know what is the hope of Christianity, and what the riches of the glory of that inheritance is to which you are called. You see the title also that you have to those great treasures: you know what that mighty power is which wrought in Christ when God raised him from the dead, whereby you are assured of the truth of all the promises, and have a good foundation of your hope: you have received the witness of the Spirit which was poured upon the apostles and prophets, and is the earnest of the inheritance: you have had the grace also to be obedient to God, which qualifies you for those divine enjoyments. And therefore what cause is there for your discontents who are so fairly endowed? *All things are your's*[e]: there is nothing that is good for you but it is at your command, (if I may speak after our manner,) even those sensible comforts too, if, by reason of any great distress, you should stand again in need of them. But, since they are most proper to beginners, and the entertainment of those who enter upon the spiritual race, do not murmur that you are without them; since it is an argument of your proficiency in the knowledge and grace of our Lord, and you have greater benefits granted you, which, if they be regarded, will yield far more solid contentment.

And that you may see what satisfaction lies already in your own breast, I beseech you, consider what greater pleasure can you be capable of than to find your will submitted to God, to overcome enemies, to wade through discouragements; unless it be this, to know that God is well pleased with you? And that is a thing which he will soon satisfy you in, if you can but satisfy yourself in the former: for *the Lord loveth the righteous, and he taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in them that hope in his mercy*[f]. Nay, I cannot but persuade myself that you believe God is more pleased to see us obey him in the weakest manner than merely to see us full of consolations, which the most sensual men in the world would be very glad to enjoy. And, as for me, I take it also to be more acceptable to him, if, against the desires of sensuality and self-will, and

[e] [1 Cor. iii. 21.] [f] [Psalm cxlvi. 8; cxlvii. 11.]

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yet without these joys, we do what he commands, than if we did the same without any opposition, and when we have the wind and tide of these pleasures to help us forward. Tell me therefore why we ourselves should not be (at least) as well pleased with what we do in a state of sadness and dulness of soul, since we are sure such works are not infected with any self-interest, but performed out of clear and pure obedience to God. It is pity that pious and sincere-hearted men should be tormented in this sort that you now are; and therefore, as I prayed you before for the love of God, so I entreat you now for the love of yourself, that at least you would rest contented (if you cannot be well pleased) with any state whereinto you shall fall, as long as therein you may do well, and cannot be hindered from obeying God as far as he requires.

And besides this, ought it not to please us that God will take any course to cure us of our diseases? That which you think is a sickness, may be but a means to prevent some worse distemper, which he discerns, though you cannot, to be a growing. He sees that one man will grow vain, and boast himself of these joys, not having an heart able to bear the weight of divine favours. Another, he sees, will proceed to overmuch confidence of his good estate by reason of these consolations, and lay a greater weight upon them than they can bear. And as for a third, he sees perhaps some little pride peeping up in his soul, and that he is ready from hence to set an higher esteem upon himself than other folks. Nay, there may be great danger lest many souls should totally putrify if they were always fed with these sweets, and therefore he thinks it best to give them some myrrh, by the bitterness of which to preserve them from corruption. They might be so greedy of these things as to mind them more than their duty; and for that cause it is best to take them away, that they may be sensible there are other matters of greater moment and necessity. But if none of these dangers should be supposed, will we not give God leave to exercise our faith and love, and make a trial of the sincerity and strength of those graces in what way he pleases? He would know perchance whether we will build our confidence upon himself and upon his promises rather than on sense; and whether we will follow after him upon the same

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account, though we have no present sensible attractive. And who can take it ill that he makes such a proof of us, seeing we do it every day ourselves to others, whose friendship we value not if they court us only when we are bestowing gifts and benefits upon them?

But if you think that this deprivation of joy is a punishment for some fault which you have committed, and that it is a token he hath sent you a bill of divorce, and separated you from him; you are much to blame in suffering your soul to make such a rash conclusion. Perhaps you have deserved to be chid for some fault, but will you presently fancy that your Father intends to disinherit you? Is it his manner to forsake and run away from us when we chance to stumble, and not rather to come and lift us up, and bid us take more heed to ourselves? I never thought he loved us so little; and, methinks, it ill comports with the notion of a father to represent him so severe. It is very necessary indeed that you should weigh your faults, and confess them sorrowfully, and mend them speedily; but I can never think it is pleasing to him that you should be so dismayed at them and afflicted for them as to imagine he will cast you off and never look upon you more. No, I believe rather he esteems this a greater disservice to him than the very fault itself, because it keeps us from mending what is amiss, and makes us so feeble, that we are apt to offend in some kind or other again: to say nothing of the dishonour it is to his goodness, and the great scandal it gives to others, who will be loath to enter into the service of that Master, whom they think it impossible to please. But then if, under the pretence of humbling yourself, you shall make a sin that is no bigger than a grain of mustard seed as great as an elephant, I beseech you, what service do you therein to your Lord? And yet this stone many are apt to stumble at, and that so oft, that in time they fancy a great sin there where indeed one can find none at all.

Do you think our Saviour will con you any thanks for aggravating your offences to this height, or accusing yourself when there is no guilt? Is there nothing for him to pardon unless you make some faults, or bring him a great mountain to cover and hide with his love? Let me tell you, my dear bro-

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ther, that this is a part of your mistakes, and a cause that you and joy are no better acquainted. You imagine that you have done nothing, and complain of such dulness as if you had stood still ever since I saw you, whenas you have made a very fair progress, and in some things, you see, have overtaken myself. And then, on the contrary, you groan under the sense of an heavy guilt; whenas you did but neglect a free-will offering, and was kept from a duty to which you had then no tie but what you received from your own hands. You are apt, I see, to overwork your soul, and to impose too great burdens upon its back: which when you are not so well able to bear as sometimes you find yourself, you are apt to think it a great fault if you take some ease: whenas, in truth, it is your duty then to omit those tasks you have enjoined yourself, that you may not neglect those duties which are required by our Saviour. Come, come, my friend, if these things be all that trouble you, my life for your's, you shall do well enough. Let but my advice be followed, though at first it should be with unwillingness; and, take my word, you shall fare the better for it in your after-course. And first, I must not have you lay more loads upon yourself than Christ hath done, nor oblige yourself without the liberty of a dispensation to so many hours of prayer and reading every day. Let it suffice to do what you can, all other things being duly considered that require your attendance.

Next, I must forbid you to make so much haste to perfection. A soft pace goes far. Do not tire your spirits by your speed, but go on so fairly and leisurely, that you may hold out. And then likewise let me not hear any more that you exhaust your natural strength, and weary your very body with much fasting, unseasonable abstinence, long prayers, or such like things, which had better be let alone, than procure so much mischief as I have seen them do. And remember, I beseech you, that lesson, which I think was taught you before this journey, that you bind not yourself always to one way of prayer or meditation, nor confine your soul to one exercise only at the hours of retirement, but choose that which shall like you best, and wherein you can proceed with the greatest freedom and delight. Besides, I perceive you have forgot another of my lessons, which

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was to make use of some innocent recreations and harmless pastimes as you went along. And therefore what I did but then advise, let me now enjoin, that you give yourself sometimes a little divertisement from more serious employments. And truly if you should say, as I know some do, that it is not for want of these joys that you complain, but because you can neither understand nor taste the goodness of divine truths, this last advice is one of the most useful that I can give you for the remedying of that melancholy dulness. All that I shall add is only this, that you would have patience, and you shall see the good temper wherein you were return of itself, as it went away without your consent.

Indeed, said the pilgrim, (who all this time had been very silent,) I am very sensible that I have lost a great many of your good counsels, or else I should not have been so bad as here you find me. And I take it for a singular favour that Jesus hath done me in sending you again hither, to rub up my memory, and to fasten those things in my mind which hung there too loose before. I must not forget likewise to acknowledge my new obligations to you, from whom I have now received not only so large, but so plain and familiar an answer to my doubt. And truly you do very prudently and charitably to lay your commands upon me to be more observant of your words hereafter; for if I should not preserve them, I see I am lost myself, and that in their safety is my security.——

Here the good father, perceiving he had given him some satisfaction, could not but interrupt his speech; and being filled with pity, and love, and joy and wonderment altogether, burst out into these expressions of them:

Now blessed be Jesus who hath brought me to you so opportunely. *O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together*[g]. We can never admire thee enough, O sweet Jesus, who art wont so seasonably to interpose thy power to save us, when we have lost ourselves. Whither should we stray, didst not thou so graciously seek us? What would become of us, didst not thou so lovingly hold us in thy hand, and resolve that none shall pluck us from thee? We are

[g] [Psalm xxxiv. 3.]

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astonished at the vastness of thy wisdom. Thy goodness is unfathomable, else we should have sunk long before this beyond the depth of it. When we wander, thou followest us and callest us back. When we fall, thou runnest to us and liftest us up. When we are discouraged, thou art the strength of our fainting spirits, and speakest comfortably to our hearts. Yea, by the rareness of thy heavenly arts thou turnest our deepest sorrows into the greatest occasions of excessive joys; and there where we thought to find nothing but trouble and heaviness, thou makest gladness and light to spring up unto us. O how unsearchable are thy ways, who meetest us when we are out of the way! O how unsearchable is thy mercy, which cureth us by that which we love, even when we are doing that which thou dost not love! We cannot but present thee with the best of our acknowledgments, who are so happily together here, not by our own, but thy providence. We cannot do less than bind ourselves together to thine altar, and offer all we have as a sacrifice of praise unto thee. And have us still, O Lord, in thy care. Let thy good Spirit alway go along with us as our guide. And let thy good angels never fail to be our guardians. *Uphold our goings in thy paths, and suffer not our feet any more to slide. Hold thou us up and we shall be safe: and we will have respect continually unto thy statutes. So will we bless thy name at all times; thy praise shall be continually in our mouths. In the courts of thine house we will praise thee; yea, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem, will we sing eternal praises*[h]. *Hallelujah.*

I thank you most heartily, said the pilgrim, (when the other had ended this acknowledgment,) for these good thoughts you have breathed into me. I feel myself as if a new soul did inform me: and my spirit doth not so much return, as another more divine seems to enter into me, and invigorate all my faculties with an higher degree of strength and courage. Sure, if you would be always with me, I should never miscarry, no, nor grow dull and lumpish any more. May I not beg that favour of you, to take me under your wings? Is it too great an happiness for me to ask, that you would become so much my friend, as to take a particular care of me, and let me travel in

[h] [Psalm xvii. 5; cxix. 7; xxxiv. 1; cxvi. 19.]

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your company? I can never expect so much security and so much comfort both together as under your conduct; and therefore, if I shall not be too great a burden, carry me along, I beseech you, with you, and let me never be left, as I was, alone without your society. You were pleased to compare me to another Hercules, because of some resolution which you discerned in me. But let me tell you, sir, that together with the joy you have made to return, I have recovered also the memory of so much of the small learning of my younger days, as to know that while Hercules was cutting off the heads of Hydra, there was one Iolaus ready at hand to apply fire to them, to hinder their springing up again. It seems this great person was not strong enough without one to back him. He durst not travel through the world, unless he took a companion with him. I never heard of any worthy that had not some genius or other to assist him, and the society also of some friend to second his undertakings. Do not expect then from me that I should be more than a miracle. Do not blame me that I cannot be so hardy as to travel any further alone toward Jerusalem. Though I should call for all the supports and aids that my courage can give me, yet I must be beholden to the help of some associate in my labours. And O that it might be my lot to fall into your company, or custody rather! for I shall acknowledge you for a kind of tutelar angel, a good familiar spirit; and receive you as the richest present that Heaven could have made me. I do not beg, you see, a friendship of you that shall serve only to pass away the time, and deceive the tediousness of being alone, but such an one as with the pleasure will bring me in an inestimable gain. Do not deny me therefore either that pleasure which I hope will not displease yourself, or that profit which will do you no hurt. Make me rich, since you will not thereby become the poorer. Impart an happiness to me, which will not abate any thing of your own repose. And truly, sir, I do not know whether Heaven have not designed you for that end, and given you a frame of nature so fit for conjunction with mine, that both together will make one perfect man. You see how earnest and violent I am; and I am very sensible of your great sobriety and discretion. Now I have somewhere read, that a friendship between two persons thus disposed is like the marriage of iron and steel, where the one

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gives toughness, and the other edge. Let us join then our hands and our hearts together, if you do not think me unworthy of such an honour. Let this be our wedding day: and from henceforth take me for your inseparable companion.

To this unexpected suit the good father made a reply to this effect. Though it be a great thing which you require, yet I would have you think that love esteems it a very small matter to give. I have called you often my friend already; and since you will have it more than a term of civility or common affection, I ought not to be less forward than yourself to advance it unto a more noble signification. I have no cause at all to suspect you of the vanity of courtship and compliment; and therefore I will be so presumptuous as to believe you have conceived for me an affection so high as that you express, provided you will also acknowledge the great passion which I have for your service. It seems so strong an obligation upon me, for a person of your desert to think of giving me his heart, that I cannot think it justice to keep mine any longer, but only under the notion of another man's goods. There are many persons, I confess, to whom I am bound by other obligations to give my advice, and the welfare of whose souls I am to attend; which might make me unwilling to hearken to this desire of yours, and engage myself in so weighty a charge. But since I discern a more than ordinary love in your breast towards me, and since I am touched with a reciprocal affection, and (which is more) do feel a certain inclination towards you above all others, I cannot contain myself, but I must agree to your motion. It is true indeed, we are engaged to love all men, and our charity ought to be as diffusive as the sunbeams; but yet I am of the mind, that some may challenge a more peculiar portion of it than other of their neighbours. For I observe that the sun itself is more fond of some plants than it is of the rest; so that we see one of his favourites turns its face about according to his motion, that it may not miss of his salutes: and another, they say, which lifts up its head above water when he arises, is wont to sink down again at his setting; as if it would then hide itself, and secretly bewail his absence. I call to remembrance also that God himself had his

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peculiar people; and that even among them there were some chosen persons to whom he communicated more of his secrets. When his own Son appeared to men with the greatest kindness towards them, yet then I see he had some select souls who were nearer to him than any other. And besides the seventy-two disciples who were particularly devoted to his service, he made choice of twelve men to be intrusted more immediately with all the mysteries of his kingdom. And methinks these twelve did not equally stand in his favour, but there was some difference which he made in his esteem of them. For I observe that there were three who were culled out to be witnesses of his glory, and before whom he was transfigured on the holy mount, when all the rest were left with the multitude below. Nay, and of these three there was one called the beloved disciple, and became his more bosom friend than either of the other two. And therefore since the Saviour of the world, that great mirror of all virtues, had his inclinations and particular friendships, I will not fear to follow so great a precedent. After an example of such high authority, I doubt not to contract a nearer and stricter amity with one than all the rest of my acquaintance. And since the same Saviour will have you to be my correspondent in so dear a love, (as I guess both by his sending now so seasonably for your relief, and also by the sudden change which your very language tells me my discourse hath wrought in your soul,) I shall gladly receive you with the greatest passion into my embraces, and hereafter become your perpetual companion, as well as your director and guide.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Of the necessity of friendship. Of faithful counsel. How the pilgrim doubted whether there was such a place as Jerusalem. The satisfaction which his friend gave him in this particular. As also the comfort he administered to him in a great sickness.

Now the poor man's heart was filled with an inexpressible joy, and he could scarce travel for a while by reason of this passion, which was as troublesome to him as the contrary had

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been before. But having at last overcome the excess of it, and dissembled it also while it stayed as well as he could, lest his friend should think he was made up of nothing but contrariety and inconstancy; on they went very merrily, singing several hymns which they had learnt, for divers miles together. When they were ended, they fell into a very pleasant discourse about heavenly poetry. And the good father did highly extol those divine souls who had converted the Muses, and of courtezans and lewd strumpets made them turn religious and saintly creatures. Surely, said he, it was a brave and noble act to reclaim them from such a debauched life as they had a long time led. It was a piece of very eminent service to the world, to reform their impure speech, and teach them the language of angels. If there were a greater number of such inspired minds, one would think they should convert the whole world, by pleasing and instructing it both together.

After he had proceeded for some time in this strain, the young pilgrim took occasion from thence to discourse of the harmony that is between some souls, and the sweet consent of two equal and well-proportioned hearts, which he thought were able to interchange the greatest felicities in the world. I have heard indeed, said he, that it was the opinion of some of the ancient sages, that a wise man stands in need of nobody but himself, and that whosoever is without him is not at all needful to him. But sure these were peevish and morose people, whom I cannot but condemn as guilty of one of the most dangerous schisms in the world. He was far wiser, I think, that said: If we look on men in general, they do not seem so much a great many several entire bodies, as so many divided parts which society reunites. I must needs confess, for my own part, that I feel myself but half a man without a friend. I cannot but place him in the number of necessary, and not only of delightful things. It is the prerogative of God to need none but himself. It is too much for us to live alone, who inclose so small a portion of wisdom and strength within our beings. I do not reckon myself safe without your company. My felicity would be imperfect, if you did not complete it. I dare not so much as trust my own thoughts, unless you approve them; nor follow my own counsels, unless you allow them.

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And here he began to speak of the necessity of faithful counsel, and that it was not to be procured without a friend. For though we love ourselves never so well, yet a friend will be less treacherous to us than we shall be to ourselves. This brought to mind a comment which was made by a wiser man than any of those sullen pieces of gravity before-named, upon that old obscure saying: Dry light is ever the best. Certain it is, saith he, that the light which a man receives by counsel from another faithful person is drier and purer than that which cometh from his own understanding and judgment. For as that which he receives is separate from all interest, so that which he gives himself is commonly infused and drenched in his customs and affections. So that there is as much difference between the counsel of a friend and that which a man bestows on himself, as between the counsel of a friend and of a flatterer. For there is no such flatterer as in a man's self: and there is no such remedy against the flattery of a man's self as the liberty of a friend. And, as one thing usually draws on another, this brought to his thoughts a handsome discourse of another person whom he had met withal, which very well illustrated the reason of it; and was to this effect. Every man, we say, is nearest to himself; but yet he is too near to be his own counsellor in things which concern himself. There is not space enough between both, wherein to debate the counsel which is given, and which is received. He cannot hinder those two reasons which deliberate in him from confounding themselves in communication; for that which proposeth is too much mixed with that which concludes. He can find no place free within to weigh his reasons: but he proposes those which will favour his own humour, and then he inclines unto them, because they are his own. He who counsels therefore must be another person distinct from him who is counselled. The objects must be set at a proportionable distance from those faculties which judge of them: and as the most quick-sighted can never see themselves; so the greatest wits want perspicacity in things that respect their own interest.

In such delightful and useful talk as this they beguiled the time, and shortened the length of the ways. And it was no small contentment, you may well think, to the good old man,

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that he was possessed of such a friend who could refresh him with his apt discourses, and give as well as receive instruction. But though the young pilgrim was a person of such competent abilities, and had so good a friend as this to assist him, imagining also when the first contract was made between them, that he should now be no more disturbed; yet he was not without some melancholy thoughts at certain seasons, of which this, as I remember, was the chief. They two being talking one day about the pleasures of Jerusalem, and the great happiness they should enjoy at their arrival there, which ought to sweeten by its expectation all the difficulties of the way; he asked his companion with a very sad and desponding countenance, if it might not admit of some dispute whether there was such a place or no, and how he would prove the existence of it.

At which question, because he seemed to make a real doubt, the father gave a very great start, and said with a more than ordinary vehemence: What! are we now to begin again, and do you remain unsatisfied of that which was the first thing you learnt? What was it that made you stir one foot in this journey, if you were not persuaded you should come to Jerusalem? Or how came you to hold out thus long, and that you did not tire many months ago? And did you not once, when you were tempted by some idle persons to disbelieve it, reject with anger all their frivolous allegations? Good God! what a thing is the soul of man! How weak and infirm is our nature! How fickle and uncertain are our most serious thoughts! And what a great patience is it that we exercise every day! Surely if thy love were not wider than the circle of heaven, we should throw ourselves out of the compass of it.——Say no more, said the other (who here interrupted his speech), for I am very sensible of the truth of what you affirm. The soul of man is an object very worthy of your pity, and whose state can never be sufficiently deplored. Nor do I know any soul that deserves it more than mine, which is made, it seems, to exercise your patience as well as God's. We cannot help it, I think (so short and forgetful are our thoughts), but we must go backward and forward. Sometimes we are confident, and sometimes we are doubtful. Now we are merry, and presently we are sad even because we were merry. Nothing will shake us in this temper, but in

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another a leaf or a feather will make us turn aside. But do not, I beseech you, upbraid unto me this misery, which rather implores your charity to find a cure for it.

Well then, said the other, in compliance with your necessity, let us step back a little, (which I hope will not prove a very great hinderance to us) and let us search if we have foolishly undertaken this journey to Jerusalem. So he led him by the hand to a certain friend's house which they had not left much behind, and there (without accepting of any refection which was offered to them) presently called for a certain book which was full of maps, attended with discourses of several countries: in one of which was a description of the promised land, and the famous city Jerusalem. And that he might be assured of the faithfulness of it, he bid him cast his eye to the bottom, and there he should find the name of the man that was the author of those fair tables: and who should that be, but Jesus, together with a servant of his, St. Paul, who finished by his direction what his Master had begun. There he found that the former of these persons professed that he came from heaven, which he proved also by many arguments of divine authority: and the latter that he was caught up into Paradise and the third heavens, where he had a perception of such things as could not be painted in those papers. And then turning over several leaves that treated of this country, he showed him such an exact description of the situation and nature of the place, of the quality of the inhabitants, of the employments wherein they are engaged, of the fruits of the soil, of the way that led to it, of the travels of several persons that had gone thither, of the return of one of them (even Jesus himself) upon several occasions into this world, and of the descent of angels which assured men of it, together with the testimony of many undeniable witnesses (all servants of Jesus) concerning the truth of these things, whom he also there examined over again before him; that he was ashamed of his incredulity, and blushed to think that he had given him this new trouble. But above all, the good man showed him that Jesus, by his last will and testament, had made over an inheritance in Jerusalem to all his faithful followers: and that he had sealed and ratified this will with his own dearest blood: and that God had set to it his

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seal also, by raising him from the dead and giving him glory at his own right hand: and that this was demonstrated and that deed of Christ further established, by the sending of the Holy Ghost upon the apostles and those to whom they preached. For this made it evident, said he, that Jesus is crowned King in Jerusalem; from whence he sent these royal gifts to men, and it is the *earnest of our inheritance;* and by it *we are sealed to the day of redemption*[a]. All which, and much more, for his further satisfaction and better remembrance, he afterwards got one to comprise in a little book; wherein was shown that *this is the record which God hath given of his Son, that in him we have eternal life*[b]. It would make my relation too long if I should transcribe that treatise, which is also come to my hands; and therefore I shall only acquaint you with the conclusion of their discourse on this argument, which was to this purpose. And now, said the father, if you call in question the credit of this story concerning Jesus, because you never saw him; I would wish you to take heed lest you be a teacher of rebellion, and learn men to justify sedition against their lawful sovereign. For if we must entertain nothing but what we ourselves see, then the rabble may do well to say, they have no king, because they never saw his face; nor hath he yet gone his progress among them: and that there are no laws that oblige them, because they were not present when they were enacted, nor heard his majesty say, The king will, or that he consented to them. For my part, I cannot see less reason to believe, that our Lord was miraculously conceived, ushered into the world by a star, and the shouts of the heavenly hosts, anointed with the Holy Ghost at his baptism, transfigured on the holy mount, confessed by devils, acknowledged by angels, justified by miracles, raised from the dead, and taken up to glory; than our children will have to believe that our present sovereign after a long banishment was suddenly restored to his throne, that he entered his royal city on such a day with the joyful acclamations of all his people; that he rode in triumph, and was solemnly crowned the year following; and that the book containing a description of the magnificent ceremonies of that day gives a true and just account of them. They that would persuade you to doubt of the truth of the holy writings,

[a] [Ephes. i. 14; iv. 30.] [b] [1 John v. 11.]

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which convey the notice of those great things to you, and whereby you hold all the hopes you have of happiness at Jerusalem, may in time think their wits so fine as to go about to prove that the great charter of England is but a forged deed, that all the liberties you think you have are but the idols of your own brain, or that the whole writing by factious spirits hath been corrupted and altered at their pleasure. And if you should say, that there are so many arguments to stop their mouths that they will be ashamed of such foolish talk; for kings have sealed it, and parliaments confirmed it, and all Englishmen have a long time asserted it; you will find yourself much mistaken, and see that these allegations are not considerable with such disputers. For so have these holy books (as I esteem them) been ever received for the apostolical writings, none could ever prove them guilty of any imposture; nor do their greatest enemies charge them with the crime of reporting false miracles; yea, the Jews acknowledge them to have been wrought, and heathen writers have set their hands to some things of no mean account; and yet these are not sufficient with such men to prove them true, because they did not stand at the apostles' elbows when they were penned and sent abroad into the world. And therefore what is the confession of all England worth to prove your liberties, since the confession of the whole Christian world for so many ages is not worth a straw with them to prove these writings? If they will not let you have a Jesus because they did not see him; why should they suffer you to enjoy any other things which they can take away upon the same pretence? But if they will permit you to enjoy the benefit of any ancient deeds, when nothing can be justly excepted against them; then we hope that it is lawful to call the gospel (as one of the ancients doth) 'our new conveyance,' whereby Jesus hath settled upon us an everlasting inheritance in the heavenly country, of far greater value than that which the Israelites by virtue of the old writings possessed in the earthly.

Here the young traveller plucked him by the sleeve, beseeching him to make no longer stay in that place; for, said he, you have dissipated all my clouds already, and I am fully persuaded that there is such a city as Jerusalem. Though I

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doubted a little of it, yet let me not be suspected of infidelity. I protest to you that I bear such a reverend regard to these writings which you have laid before me, that I would rather lose all the goods I have in the world than part with them. I have a long time held them so sacred that they have been my comforters in all my troubles, and the songs of my pilgrimage. At this very moment I carry them about me, and shall hereafter set a greater value on them; for what I have held by custom I shall now hold by reason, and be able to render an account to those that ask of the hope that is in me. Let us go on, sir, I entreat you, without any further dispute; and howsoever negligent I have been in former times, I am resolved hereafter to read this holy book with more attention of mind; and to procure thereby that this short stay may not make me come a whit the later to my journey's end.

It is very well done, said the father, that you have provided yourself with so necessary a companion as that book is; which might serve to direct you without me, but that I see you are not sufficiently acquainted with the language of it. When you read of the *witness of the Spirit*, it is like you waited for some immediate assurance of the truth of these writings. And when you heard them speak of our being *sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise*, you looked for an inspiration, and expected to be stamped and impressed with a certain persuasion of their authority. Which is as much as to say, that you desired to be endued with a confidence, which as it stood upon no ground, so might be shaken without any cause at all. But I pray you hereafter to be as good as your word, applying your mind more vigorously to comprehend the sense of what you read; and where you doubt of any thing, repair to me, that I may assist your understanding. And, above all things, let me once for all advise you to use all means to strengthen your faith concerning the other life, and to assure yourself upon such evidence as I have given you, that Jesus is gone to Jerusalem, and there expects your coming to him. Do but firmly persuade your heart of this, and keep it in your mind, and then I shall think it as impossible for you to grow weary as for the sun to stand still; and as impossible you should miscarry as that the sun should fall from his orb.

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After he had received a promise from him that he would do his endeavour to make his soul more sensible of this weighty thing, they buckled themselves afresh to their march. And never did the young man travel so lustily as now; for he had gathered much strength by his doubting, and thought he felt himself attracted and haled towards heaven by the glory of it which now shone upon him; just as the loadstone draws iron to it, and makes it skip into its bosom. If I should say that he ran now rather than went, I should misreport the fervours wherein he felt himself; which indeed furnished him with wings, and made him not so much to run as fly towards the holy city of God. He was all airy, and seemed not to touch the earth with his feet: and as for his own flesh, he had so many spirits, that it was no more a burden to him than the feathers are to a bird, which rather help than hinder it in its flight. But yet (so mutable is this body of ours) he had not flown very long, being assisted by every thing that he saw, or heard, or met withal, before he was made sensible that he was clothed with a greater weight of flesh than he imagined, and that this globe of earth had a greater power over him than he was willing to believe. For he was seized with such a violent sickness, and felt his blood in such a boiling heat, that he thought now he was not in the air, but at the best in a thick cloud of stinking vapours which almost choked his vital spirits. He had not mounted up to so high a pitch before, but he fancied now that he was sunk as low; and that the terrestrial parts prevailed, if not far more, yet as much as the aërial had lately done. Very often he laboured to heave up himself, and left no means unattempted to soar aloft as he was wont; but all in vain, for he was so oppressed and overloaded with that sluggish matter which now flowed through his whole body, that he could scarce fetch his breath, unless it were in sighs and groans at the alteration which he suffered. Just as a vessel of good wine, which now being sweet and pleasant, is rendered ere long acid and ungrateful to our palate, by the ascent and flowing of those saline particles which before were thrust down or put aside; so was his spirit soured and rendered unacceptable to himself, by the floating again of those ill humours, which he hoped had been buried in their graves, never to rise and disturb him any more.

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It would be both too tedious and too sad to relate all the affliction which he endured from his dejected thoughts; and I shall rather choose to tell you how his companion addressed himself to his cure, whereby you will understand sufficiently the nature of his disease. I am sorry to see you thus ill, (said his kind physician when he first came to him,) but it is no more than I expected; and it would not much trouble me if I did not find your mind more disordered than your body. I will not add so much to your pain as to bid you tell me what it is that troubles you; for I am not so unacquainted with these distempers, but that I perceive the symptoms of a mind much grieved, because it cannot think of Jesus and Jerusalem with the same freedom and pleasure that it did not long ago. This, I easily see, is the sickness you labour under; and, setting aside the anguish which this creates, I do not believe you have any reason to complain. But, I pray you, my dear brother, do you not think of our Lord very much when you are patient and quietly resigned to his will in every thing? Are you not much in his company when you take up your cross with a meek spirit, saying, *Not my will, but thine be done?* For what was Jesus but a great example of patience and humble submission to the pleasure of God throughout the whole course of his life? Why do you then place the contentment of your heart in being able to pray with your wonted intention, and to contemplate divine things with such a clearness as when you were in the pure sky; and not rather in accomplishing the will of our Lord, who knows what place is best for us, and what condition will most certainly conduce to our good? Let me ask you, is not this sickness now come upon you by his appointment, and sent by the direction of his wise providence? Do you not think it to be his will, that the time which not long ago was spent in praying, should now be spent in vomiting? Let it be so then, (as a good man was wont to say,) and let us not mutter at it; but see you take more pleasure in this that he is pleased than if you possessed heaven and earth. And suppose this be a punishment for some offence, and that now he chastises some inordinate desire; for I discern, methinks, an indication of some such scruple that molests your thoughts: what have you more to do in that case but to be thankful, and to cast yourself at his feet, desiring both correc-

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tion and forgiveness? to be thankful, I say, because we are much beholden to him that he will put himself to the trouble of finding out means of our amendment. Nay, some pious men have thought that to be corrected by the hand of such a Father, and with so much love, doth put us rather into a need of humility for the moderating our joy which we shall be apt to conceive in his charity towards us, than of the virtue of patience whereby to endure the punishment that he lays upon us. For is it not a great favour that he will look after us? Is it not a mark of his esteem that he thinks it worth his pains to use his rod to reclaim us? And would you have him be so fond as to let you proceed to commit those faults which he knows will utterly spoil you? Should he love you if he did forbear his stripes, when he sees there is great need of such sharp instruments to reform you? Or do you think he delights to afflict, and takes a greater pleasure to hear you cry and roar under his hand than to hear you sing and rejoice in his arms? It is unchristian to impute unto him such cruelty. You cannot, without impiety, imagine either that he will not chastise his children in order to make them cease to offend, or that he will not grant a pardon when they humbly bow their wills to his and ask it of him. No question he will do both when cause requires; and though sometimes he gives a pardon without any correction, yet never the correction without an intent to pardon. Lie still therefore under his fatherly hand, and then, I assure you, there is greater reason both to be thankful, and also to expect a pardon; because you are much amended when your own will is so broken that you can submit to any of his rods.

But here I must not forget to admonish you of one thing which I have somewhere read in the advices of a grave person, which is, to take great heed that your flesh do not deceive and cheat you with its dissimulations while you are in this state, endeavouring to slubber over negligence under the pretext of —'I cannot do any more.' It is true, we are not tied to that which we cannot do; but yet the flesh will sometimes juggle and complain of impotence when there is nothing hinders us but only sloth. Here you must look upon yourself with a great many eyes; you must become your own spy, and nar-

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rowly watch the most secret motions of your heart. For this Eve that is within us is so desirous to be cherished and pleased, to be walking up and down the garden, and to be eating of the forbidden fruit, that she wants not a thousand inventions to make us believe that her demands do not extend to superfluities, but only to things necessary for us; that she doth not desire ease and pleasure so much as rest from hard labours; and she is in a mighty chafe if we will not give a perfect credit to her. She persuades us sometimes that we are much weaker than, in truth, we can affirm ourselves to be: she tells us that we cannot, with safety, think of any thing else but her, and is not willing to let us make a trial: she bids us attend only to her quiet and satisfaction, and not suffer the mind to disturb her repose at all: and the more we humour and gratify her desires, the more still she bemoans herself to move our pity towards her. It concerns us therefore to be careful in observing what good it is that we can then perform without a manifest prejudice to our health, and to make provision that it be not neglected by means of the heavy complaints of laziness and sloth. Look up unto Jesus as often as you can. Tell him in the secrets of your soul that you heartily love him. Open your very bosom to him, and show how desirous you are to be more conformed unto him by this affliction. Pray him to come and ransack your heart, and to throw out of doors whatsoever is offensive to him. Let him know that you had rather (not only be sick, but) die a thousand times than not be friends with him: and so intreat him to take pity upon you: promise him to do whatsoever he would have you; and exhort all others of your acquaintance, that they would love and serve him more than you can do. And this let me add for your comfort, that sometimes he bestows more favours upon sick men in their beds, who can pray in no other manner but by the humiliations and prostrate submissions of their wills to him, than he doth upon some others who spend many hours on their bended knees in that holy exercise. And do not despair, I beseech you, of receiving this mercy, though you think yourself never so unworthy of it, since it costs him no more, but only his will to bestow it.

With these and such like discourses the good man enter-

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tained his friend in this sickness for many days, which put the time into a speedier pace than otherwise it would have passed away. Though he kept his bed for some weeks, yet the hours did not seem at all tedious to him, but rather fled away as fast as he used before to do himself. So happy a thing is it to have a partner in our troubles, and the assistance of another shoulder beside our own to bear our griefs. Good discourses are like the breath of heaven, which when the burdened vessel feels, she cuts her way through all the waves, and never complains of the greatness of her burden. Nay, they proved to him like the cool air which refreshes the gasping traveller in a hot day, making his very body feel its legs the sooner by the delicate touches which they gave unto his spirit. All the art of his doctors and an whole apothecary's shop had not been able to restore his consumed flesh so easily, and in such a little space of time, as these sovereign cordials which distilled from the good man's lips, and were drawn, he felt, from the very bottom of his heart. I have wondered sometimes, when I considered the suddenness of his recovery; for, though he lay some weeks in a feeble condition, it was because he did not at first receive these medicines, which so soon as he tasted he became another man, and seemed to have a new essence infused into him. It is no new piece of philosophy, but an axiom older than Hippocrates, and which calls Solomon (that great physician) its father: *Heaviness in the heart of a man makes it stoop: but a good word maketh it glad*[a]. And in another place of his aphorisms we read, that *A merry heart doth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones*[b].

[a] Prov. xii. 25. [b] xvii. 22.

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CHAP. XXIX.

Of the trouble which the pilgrim was in about some business which had lain neglected during his sickness. Of his desires after a contemplative life. Of solitude. The profit of it: especially at the beginning of our Christian course. And how they that enjoy it do not find all the satisfaction which they expected in it.

Being able therefore, by the good inspirations of his friend, (whose mouth he acknowledged was a *well of life*[c],) to go about the house; he spent as much time as he was able in praising God, instructing the servants, and doing good to all his neighbours, not neglecting any duty which God or man required of him. But so it was, that, having been long sick, there were some necessary businesses in which both he and his friend were concerned, that had lain as long as himself without any regard. These called very importunately upon him for his attendance, and being very weighty, and requiring quick despatch, would not cease to solicit more of his thoughts than he was willing to allow them. It will be of no use to tell you what they were, but it may be sufficient to let you know that they were of such moment that, without a manifest wrong both to himself and others, he could by no means put them off, nor make them rest contented with a cold and slow management of them. And yet from hence his mind took occasion to spring a new doubt, which he had not power to remove himself till he had made it known to his friend, though his affairs were not so urgent but that they left him a little leisure to consider of that which might have given him some satisfaction. For whensoever a crowd of little occasions thronged in upon him, and would not be denied his company, then he began to frown upon himself because he did not find so much vacancy as his heart desired for private prayer and recollection.

To this the father said, (as soon as he had eased himself of the scruple by telling of it,) that for his part he was very glad to find he had such a vehement love for retired thoughts and secret converse with God; and that he sighed so much after

[c] Prov. x. 11.

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it, as far more delightful to him than the open world and all the bravery which it hangs out to us. But he told him also that he was to be blamed for thinking himself less pleasing to God in what he was a doing, because he was less pleasing to himself. For, do you not know, said he, that God hath bidden us serve our neighbour as much as we can; and that it is an idle pretence to say we love God, whom we never saw, if we love not our brother, whom we see continually? And hath he not placed us in a body which must be fed, and that cannot be nourished with thoughts and live upon meditations; nor be supported without the labour of its own hands? Why, then, do you complain that it cannot be filled with a prayer, and have its hunger satisfied with an hymn? Perhaps it may so fall out, that a great many things shall require our service at one and the same time; and though we call not for them all together, yet they call on us and bid us mind them, or else they say that they will be gone, and not wait upon our leisure. Is there any reason now to turn those things away that will not come again? or shall we trouble ourselves that we have not the disposal of other men's wills, and cannot make them come to us only when we please to call them? why may we not be contented to let all necessary affairs take as much of our time as they ask, seeing God will have us so employed? Contented, I say, for I did never yet forbid you to desire more time wherein to recollect yourself and retire unto God; but would rather have you to wish for that, while you are forced to serve other things. He is not to be commended that is glad of a multitude of businesses, and loves (as we say) to have his hands full of the world: but yet he is no ways deserving of our praise neither, who, when his calling thrusts it upon him, and he is got into the midst of it, is still bewailing himself and troubled at his portion. The true way to peace is, to set our hands with all diligence to the necessary works of our calling, but to set our hearts upon the more immediate service of our Lord. To do our business, whatsoever multiplicity there happen to be in it; but to long to do something else, if that would permit us. Yet still I say we must so long after the higher life, that our desires do not breed in us any disgust or impatience in the lower; which will both make our business longer, and unfit us for our spiritual employments.

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You remember, I make no doubt, of the story of Jacob, how much he was enamoured of fair Rachel; but that though he served several years for her, yet he was put off with the embraces of Leah, and forced to endure another apprenticeship for his most beloved. And the reason of it, you know, is there rendered, because it was not the fashion of that country to dispose of the younger before the elder sister. I have sometimes thought that this may not unfitly be accommodated to represent unto us the estate and condition of pious souls, while they are like Jacob in this pilgrimage far from their father's house. They are extremely desirous to be wholly wedded to the fair and amiable life of contemplation, prayer, and constant passions of love of God. This they court and woo above all other things, hoping in a little time to obtain their suit, and spend their days in such happy enjoyments. But so it is, that they must be employed a long while otherwise, before they can reasonably expect to arrive at the felicity of being wholly sequestered unto that life. And such is the necessity of this world, that when we imagine we shall now be at perfect leisure for it, something or other still thrusts us into a different way of living. Nay, the manner of this country is such, that we must be contented to serve first in these baser employments, before we can be permitted to come to these nobler retirements. With this worldly life we all begin, and it is the elder of the two. Nay, most of us are forced, by many years' labour in providing for the lower man, to procure to ourselves a liberty of being more vacant to the service of our souls. And it is very well, I assure you, if after more years than Jacob served, God shall be pleased to bless us with such a proportion of these worldly goods, that we may repose ourselves with greater quietness in the bosom of a more contemplative life. Then we may be allowed, in compare with this beautiful Rachel, to hate Leah and all her earthly business: yea, it will be expected at our hands, when we are furnished as Jacob was with flocks and herds, and can say, We have enough; that we quit the world and retreat from our secular affairs, and betake ourselves more entirely to the higher life. And this favour perhaps our Lord may indulge us, when we are grown a little older and shall be more ripe for it; but till that time let us be patient as the patriarch was; and in hope at last to enjoy this

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sweet, this beloved life, not suffer the other to seem at all a tedious state unto us.

This discourse did not a little gratify our young traveller, who now fancied himself another Jacob; wishing for nothing so much as to have the fair damsel we spoke of given him to be his wife. And so much he had impressed his mind with the idea of that more excellent conversation, that had it not been for the last words his friend spake, and that he considered also it is wont to remain like Rachel a great while, more barren than the other; he had fallen into reproaches of this bleareyed life, which makes us such strangers to diviner objects, that when we behold them our eyes smart and grow sore by reason of their splendour. It is too little to say that he loved it; for he burnt with desire after it. When he was employed about the affairs of this life, the time seemed like the cold frosty nights wherein Jacob kept the flocks of Laban in the field. Then were his sunshine days, and his heart all in an ardour of love and joy, when he was within doors secluded from the herd of the world, and shut up with God in his soul. If there was any heat and eagerness in the despatch of his ordinary business, it was by a reflection from these greater flames, which excited him to pursue that with the more agility, that he might the sooner quit his hands of it, and be free for God.

And thus having placed his affections, I need not tell you how oft he used to steal a glance of those heavenly objects, even when he was in the midst of some of his worldly occasions. This I always observed, that when it was left to his own choice what part he would take to manage, he would ever lay hold on that which would give most liberty for his thoughts to withdraw themselves sometimes to better things. And having good Jacob so much in his mind, he used to say that he wondered the shepherds of all other men were not most envied, (whose name God hath assumed into his titles,) because their life is so like to His who rules the whole world, and yet enjoys himself. For his part, as he passed along in his journey, and saw those swains with their sheephooks in their hands, he could not for his life but fancy them to be sceptres, and the

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men to be so many petty kings, whose obedient people left them nothing else to do but to please themselves. O happy sovereigns, was he wont to say, who have such peaceable subjects! O princely souls, whose royalty is attended with none of those enemies of liberty, which make the thrones of others uneasy! There is none privy to what you do, but only yourselves. None of those ceremonies trouble you, which encumber all the actions of kings. You live in the kingdom of wisdom. Your minds are free for the noblest contemplations. Your court is frequented with no flatterers. And it is not hard for you to know those that love your persons from those that love your fortune. You are not enforced either to be loaded with cares, or else with the reproach of being negligent. Your leisure is far better than all the employments which others seek. It is better to want with you than to abound with all the world beside. Your deserts are far in my esteem before the glory of princely palaces. And there are no chains so well made or so fairly gilded over, that could tempt me out of your liberty.

When he had recovered himself out of these pleasant transports, he oftentimes fell into a very sober commendation of solitude, which he used to call the gate that lets into the inward world, the suburbs of heaven, and the mistress of such noble satisfactions as the courts of kings cannot equal. The profit of this hidden and unknown life, said he, is not to be expressed; when, obscuring ourselves in our own souls, we have the greater light within; and communicating solely with our Lord, in that one object we enjoy more than all the world. So necessary it is, that I find he cannot be wise that is not retired. He must be a fool that shuns his own company. He thinks all things better than himself, who forsakes himself to be with them. If the world had not lost their wits, they would not thus slight and pass by their own souls. If their taste were not spoiled, they would find more delight as well as more profit at home, than can be enjoyed abroad. Though peace and innocence make no great noise, yet their undisturbed pleasures yield the highest contentment. Their pleasures are such, that it is hard for great persons and those who are much in the world to take their share in them. And as for all others, since we must

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divide them with those men whom by no means we would be like, they cannot import very much to our satisfaction.

A great number of other things he heaped up in praise of this private life, till at last he endeavoured to derive honour upon it from the example of our Lord, who he thought was much delighted in it: for he observed that it was thirty years before he would frequent the world; and that after he did appear he was wont very often to retire himself even from the company of his own family. And I think he had added a great deal more in this argument, had not his companion here interposed this sudden question: What then? are you so affected to this life as to wish you may be left alone? You mean, belike, to quit me too, and turn an hermit, to enjoy yourself the better when nobody shares in your affections. By no means, replied the pilgrim as hastily; for though he is never alone who is accompanied with noble thoughts, yet I should think myself too much alone without your company. This solitude doth not exclude our friends, but rather make room for them. We cannot enjoy whom we would, unless we retire and separate ourselves from the multitude. There we may pick and choose; but in the crowd men will thrust themselves upon us. And therefore I would be alone, that I may have more of you: I would go aside from the world, that I may not be drawn so much from you. And, indeed, whatsoever profit or pleasure there is that I fancy in this private life, they must needs be multiplied by the company of a friend, to whom I may impart the benefits that I receive. The most plentiful feast without a companion is the life of a lion or of a wolf. Let my fulness be never so great I shall suffer hunger as long as I want one of your goodness to taste my happiness with me. We were taught, I remember, at school, that rest in ancient times was styled the food of the gods; and therefore I have since thought that a retreat from business cannot but be very necessary for man. But as their leisure was thought to be sweetest when they enjoyed it together; so I conceive will my solitude be, if you think good also to live alone with me. I do not fancy there are any anchorets in the other world. There are no deserts in those spacious plains which we see above. The heavenly natures love society; and therefore I will not labour to

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be unlike them. And, indeed, if I were perfectly shut up in my own soul, I could not make it such an hermitage but that the image of you would still dwell with me.

Well, said the father, I am very much beholden to you, that you would make me the companion of your most secret pleasures; and it lays a great obligation on me to be good, if it were but for this only, that there may be no image imprinted on such a soul as yours but what is fair and lovely. It must be confessed also that there is very great use of solitariness, especially in the beginnings of a new life. Then if one should ask me, What shall I fly? I would answer, as one of the philosophers did, Fly the multitude. For while a man is weak in virtue, he is like to one that hath been long sick; if you stir him from the place where he is, he grows worse. Such a man can scarce return back from the world with the manners he carried out with him: something that he had composed is put into disorder; some evil that he had chased away comes back to him unawares; some good resolution which he had formed is lost in a great crowd of temptations; and the bad customs which he had shaken off will endeavour again to renew their acquaintance. All places being full of ill examples, there is the greater danger of infection. There is none but either commends a vice, or impresses it on us, or secretly rubs us with it. And it is very hard to beat off the assaults of enemies, when they come in so great troops upon us. It is good counsel therefore, at such a time, Retire into yourself; shut up your soul within doors, and let it not stir abroad. And truly he hath very honourable thoughts of us, who thinks us fit to bear ourselves company. He reposes a great confidence in us, who dares trust us to ourselves; for there is no worse society for a man than his own, if he do not design to become good. Fools and madmen ought not to be left in their own hands. For as the wise employ their solitude in pious counsels and sober advices for the good government of themselves; so the wicked then meditate bad designs, and plot the fulfilling of naughty desires: they whet their anger, or irritate their lust, or brazen their foreheads to commit all villainy; and what fear and shame concealed from the world, they bring forth then before themselves, and prepare it to come abroad. See then what a good opinion I have conceived of you, in that I bid you not to

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fly yourself. I must needs take you for a man of worthy thoughts, or else I should not permit you to be alone. And let me tell you, that I promise myself you will improve your own company so well as to be worthy at last to be trusted in the open world. When your mind is well fortified, and your resolution confirmed, the world will need such a good example, to reform the evil wherewith it abounds. We are not born for ourselves alone; but others must feel there is a good man still remaining among them. It is fit, indeed, that at certain times you should all your life sequester yourself from men, so it be without affectation of singularity, or making any noise; but there you must not bury yourself, nor make your closet a tomb wherein to converse with nobody but the dead. *Your light must so shine before men, that, seeing your good works, they may glorify your Father which is in heaven.* And you must *show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light*[a]. But having given you an example of both these in the blessed Jesus, I will not suspect your memory of so much unfaithfulness as to think you stand in need to have those instructions repeated. I will rather pray you to let me know how you find yourself in those retirements, and whether you meet with so great satisfaction in them as now you expect to reap.

And truly afterward he confessed, that making his retreat very frequently into this sovereign privacy, he could not alway be master of those brave thoughts which he imagined he should have enjoyed. That life, he saw, had its imperfections; and he looked to enjoy there those delightful spectacles which too often withdrew themselves from his sight, and could not be wooed to favour him with their continual presence. He found that we do not yet live in the country of ideas and the land of perfections; but that we dwell in lower regions, and are forced to travel among chimeras, and fight many times with monstrous imaginations. At the best we do but see the shadows of things; or if we gain a true image of them, yet we must be content to sit down a great way on this side of that excellent life, the image of which we have conceived in our mind. The pattern is too big for us while we are shut up in these prisons; and to be so free in our thoughts and affections, it is necessary

[a] [Matt. v. 16; 1 Pet. ii. 9.]

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that we obtain a release from these bodies. Only thus much benefit he reaped from this dear solitude wherein he sometimes reigned; that he was verily persuaded he should one day arrive at the freedom and peace of Jerusalem. He could not think that his soul should always dwell so far short of that happy country, of which he had such a lovely picture in his mind. It seemed unreasonable to imagine that, when all other things are suffered to grow to their height and utmost perfections, the spirit of man only should ever remain a dwarf, or rather continue a child, and never be unloosed from its swaddling-bands. No, no, would he frequently say, I feel my soul untying these bands; it grows too great for these clothes, and cannot suffer itself to be thus confined; it aspires to that happy state which admits of no defects, and will make me call myself a man; it longs and groans to be above itself; it stretches its hands to reach the perfection of purity, and to *lay hold on eternal life*[b]; it would fain remove from these shadows, and hopes to converse with the very things themselves. Oh how it sighs to do what it now designs! how it breathes after the enjoyment of that which it hath in desire! The day will come, sure, that shall cast no cloud about my mind, nor stir the least breath of inordinate passion in my soul. It will not be long before I be always serene, and have the happiness to live in a constant tranquillity and untroubled repose. The time, I believe, hastens when my knowledge shall be so clear, that faith shall find no employment, and hope shall receive a discharge, and charity shall be left alone in its full strength.

With these and other such-like pleasant thoughts they entertained themselves as they travelled over many fair plains; deceiving the length of the miles by the variety of discourse, and the prettiness of sundry contemplations. For the truth is, his good angel (as I may call him) never failed to put him in mind of such things as might be worthy of observation in their journey, or might administer a profitable or innocent delight to sweeten their way. And, among other things, I remember, that one day as they went through a certain place, which was more like a garden than an high way, he asked him if he was not afraid of those strange beasts in green skins, and those

[b] [1 Tim. vi. 12.]

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armed men with weapons of the same colour in their hands. At which he smiling said, Though you have been conscious too much of my weakness, yet I have so much courage, as not to be affrighted at the images of things which I see cut in hedges. You shall see how confidently I will walk naked by that lion, and that the bear in the other thicket shall strike no terror into me. And it pleases me very much to think that the trouble which my often infirmities have given you is not so great, but that you can make yourself merry with them: and I am willing to recreate you a little more by bragging thus of my present boldness. Indeed, said the father, you could not have well gratified me more than you do, in sporting with that which others more morose would have taken for a reproach. But let us seriously, I pray you, consider, is there much more harm in many of those things at which the world is wont to tremble? Do they not fly from terrible nothings, wherewith they see the ways of piety are beset? The reproaches which tear our names in pieces like a lion; the bitter words which men's tongues shoot like arrows in our faces; nay, that great bear Poverty, which turns so many out of the way, what are they? If you view them and all their fellows well, you will find they are as innocent, nay, as profitable too, as those peaceable creatures which you here behold. They are but like those bows which are made of bays, and can do no hurt. Or like those guns which you see wrought in rosemary and sweet-brier, and such like things, which shoot flowers, and dart forth musk. Or like those beasts of hyssop and thyme, which are very medicinal to those who know how to use them.

From hence he fell into a very grave advice, (which he said could not be too often repeated,) that he should not fail to give God thanks for those things which went cross unto him, as much as he was wont to do for those which were most conformable to his desires. He showed him how we stand indebted to Divine Providence not only for our food, but for our physic also. He made him understand how the contempt we meet with from men doth purge our pride; how poverty cures our luxury and wanton desires; and how nothing is so powerful as sickness to deliver us from the great evil of ingratitude: it being seldom known that men consider the vast benefits of

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health till they be without it. In short, he convinced him plainly, that a great fulness of all things is very apt to choke the sense of God: that when men are in constant prosperity, as they want not abilities and instruments to sin, so they want the strong restraints of fear, of modesty, and of good counsel to keep them from it. And though, said he, if they wanted the last only, their condition would be sad enough; yet it is seldom known that they have the benefit of it, because there is either none to give it, or they are not apt to receive it. But adversity will flatter no man, itself supplying the place of an hundred monitors; and being the only sober and trusty counsellor which great men have in their retinue. And if there were no other advantage that it brings, we should have great reason to thank God, that he would not let us die without the company of a faithful friend.

CHAP. XXX.

How the pilgrim grew very dull and lazy. By what means he was quickened to greater diligence. How the guide awakened some sluggish pilgrims which they met withal: moving them to a great care of their souls; and to prove their sincerity in religion, by their being zealous of good works.

But as I may not be permitted to relate all the delightful discourse of this nature which passed between them in their travels, so you must not think that our pilgrim had now left all trouble behind him, never to overtake him more. For having thus spent his time for some weeks, he felt himself exceeding dull; and through some indisposition, (the cause of which he could not discover,) he began to be so lazy and listless to any good action, which had formerly been his delight, that it endangered to overwhelm him in a new affliction of mind. But yet it pleased God so to order it, that this cloud was cast about him without any shower; and he cured himself of this re-stiffness of spirit by some common observations which he made as he went along. For they had not travelled far, before they found a great number of men digging in a mine, who were all bathed in their own sweat; and, instead of the fresh air to cool them, were in perpetual danger of suffocation by infernal

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vapours. And being asked, for what they took such excessive pains, they gave them to understand that the best of their wages was very small, and that some were such slaves as laboured merely for coarse food; not so much as a grain of all the silver ore which they raked out of the earth's bowels coming into their possession. At the sight of which he was strangely awakened, and, falling into a mighty passion, began to reproach himself, to accuse his great folly, and to condemn his sloth; who was less concerned for a soul, than these men for a belly-full of meat or a few single pennies. What do we, O my soul? (said the good pilgrim,) Why do we lie still, and suffer ourselves to perish? Are there any pains like those to which these wretches are condemned? Or are there any treasures that can equal those which we are seeking after? O how disproportionable are their labours unto their gains! And how much will our gains exceed the greatest of our pains! Blush, O my soul, at thy own neglects: and be astonished either at their diligence or thy own sloth. Or, rather, let the strangeness of the one make thee marvel at the other. And for very shame, let it rouse thee to do that for thyself which they do for their bodies; or to be but at half the labour to attain eternal treasures, which they take, not for perishing riches, but for a morsel of meat, which only prepares them to renew their labours. In such meditations as these he spent some time, to the no small quickening of his soul in well doing. Which were also happily revived the next day by the sight of some ships, which, from a mountain that they passed over, he espied riding on the sea; whose waves did then so work and boil, that the face of it was all yeasty, and it foamed with rage at the winds which spent their fury upon it. From hence he took occasion to consider the hazard which they run, who trusted themselves to that treacherous element: how they were carried sometimes to unseen regions, of which they had no knowledge but by the uncertain reports of others: how uncertain their returns were, and how the poor mariners had no interest at all in the goods which they ventured their lives to bring home to other owners. This inspired his soul, and swelled it with new resolutions, more than a strong gale of wind doth the sails of a ship when she runs before it. He despised all dangers. He defied the lazy disposition wherein he lately found himself. He

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applauded the reasonableness of Christian piety, which was carried by faith to unknown countries. And he vowed never to quit the design wherein he was embarked; especially since he had so good assurance at last to come to an happy port. From whence he also knew that he should never loose any more, to be thus tossed in doubts and fears, to be exposed to the storms of an angry world, and (which was most troublesome) to conflict with the great uncertainties of his own temper, whereby he was sometimes lifted up as high as heaven, and then again depressed as low as hell.

And truly after this I heard that he continued *very fervent in spirit, serving the Lord*[c]. Insomuch, that meeting a good while after with some pilgrims who were remiss and negligent, a great zeal was kindled in him, and he called upon his guide very earnestly to use his spurs, and prick them up to a greater diligence. Which motion you will easily think the good father was not backward to embrace; but drawing a little nearer to them, and well observing their careless postures, he asked them what the reason might be of that lazy and wretchless life which men of their profession lead. Are you not convinced, said he, of the truth of that religion which is taught by Christ? Do you take Jesus for an impostor, and think that he lies in his grave, and never shall come to judge the world by his laws? Or do you think that he hath commanded impossible things, and made a law which cannot be put in use and practice? How then shall he judge the world in righteousness? Or how came it to pass that you undertook his service, if you thought that none can come in his ways to the happiness of Jerusalem? For my part, I can see nothing that should make it seem impossible to be so good as Christ hath required, but only the lives of a number of such wretches as yourselves. And lest I should seem to reproach you, or my words should not meet with due regard from you, hearken, I beseech you, to the language of one who indeed commands your attention, if it be but for the reverence which you bear to his years, and the place which he held in the church of God. It is the famous patriarch of Constantinople which I mean, who thus awakens some such drowsy souls as yours. "Suppose a Gentile," saith

[c] [Rom. xii. 11.]

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he, "should come to thee, and say, 'If thou lookest for a kingdom in heaven, why dost thou mind this world so much? Sure thou dost but talk; they are but words which thou tellest to us. If thou expectest the dreadful tribunal of Christ hereafter, why dost thou not despise the most terrible things that threaten thee in this life? If thou expectest immortality, why do we not see thee laugh at death?' What answer now wilt thou return to this objector? What wilt thou say for thyself, who tremblest at the loss of a little riches for the kingdom of heaven's sake, and rejoicest at the gain of a farthing, as if it were a great prize? This is that which scandalizes the Gentiles, and makes them mock both at thee and thy religion too. Do not therefore study so much to apologize for it by thy words as by thy deeds. Let him see such a one as Christ describes, not only in thy books, but in thyself. Make it manifest to him that there is such a religion in being alive in the world, and that it lies not dead in parchment. Suffer it not to be the work of the scribe, or (as we now speak) of the printer only, but let him read it in thy life. Make him confess that the gospel commands things that may be done, and doth not draw a Platonical commonwealth, or describe (as we say in these days) an Eutopian polity. Suppose again, that a Gentile should say to thee, 'Good sir, how shall I know that your God requires possible things? They look like things which cannot be done; and I never saw any Christian such a man. Behold, thou wast brought up in thy religion from thy childhood, and yet dost no such things; with what face then dost thou require them of me, who have been long accustomed other ways?' What wilt thou now reply in the behalf of Christianity? Perhaps thou wilt point him to others, and desire him not to look on thyself. Thou wilt bid him cast his eyes upon the monks, and those who live in wildernesses, where he may behold what holy lives they lead. O most shameful apology! For he will say, 'What then, must I turn a monk? Must I live in mountains, and dwell in the deserts? Must I forsake all company but only that of the beasts? This is a strange religion, of which a man cannot be, unless he leave the society of men. A religion that cannot dwell in towns and cities. A religion that flies the light, and seeks for dens and caves of the earth. That is an enemy to the best of pleasures, that banishes good neighbourhood, and renders a man an hater

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of the rest of mankind. I will none of this religion: keep it to yourself, and do not invite me to your melancholy piety.'

"This truly is a very great disgrace to the Christian profession, to make as though it could not inhabit any place, and be performed by any men. There is no excuse to be made for it. If it cannot stay with us in towns, and keep us company in business, and be the employment of common men, away with it; it is not for our turn; let it be banished the world. Show to me a man that hath a wife and children, and servants, and yet is a Christian. Let me see a man that keeps his shop and buys and sells, and yet lives well and keeps the laws of Christ. Doth not our Saviour say, *Let your light shine before men?* but where do we read that it is to illustrate deserts, and make the mountains glorious? Which is not spoken (saith he) to reproach those persons who choose to dwell in such places; but only to bemoan our cities that have driven virtue from among them, and thrust it out of their gates into the wilderness. Let us endeavour, I beseech you, to call it back again. Let us bring it to dwell within the walls of cities, as well as those of monasteries. Let us reduce it into our families, and our shops, and our markets; nay, into our taverns and victualling-houses. Let us render it sociable and fit for conversation, that all men may be the better for it. Suffer no place to be void of religion; but make it extend itself like the Divine presence, which is ready to assist men every where. Do not say any longer that you cannot be good. He never took the business seriously into his thoughts; he never gave all diligence, who speaks that wicked word. And do not say to me neither that you cannot understand the religion of Christ, and know not what to do. For see how skilful the most simple people are in their worldly affairs: see what exactness they use; how accurate and circumspect they are wont to be in some of their outward concerns. Let them employ the same in spiritual things, and I will warrant they shall not be overlooked by the Divine grace, nor miss of being wise to salvation. The sun shines not so clear as the truth of God. Where men have a mind, they may easily come to the knowledge of him. If they would but attend, and not make a by-word of it, they would neither be so ignorant nor so impotent as they are. For the gospel was not shut up in

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Palestine, nor confined to some corner of the world; but *all shall know me* (saith the Lord) *from the greatest to the least*[d]; and every place may become an holy land. But will you extend this thing, may some say, to the barbarous nations, and the rustic understandings? Yes, that I will; and if there can be any still more barbarous than those that we yet know, I affirm that they may have the benefit of it. For tell me, pray you, since one of those men can in things belonging to this present life argue for himself if he be wronged, resist when he suffers violence, and do all things not to be endamaged in the least; why may he not use the same understanding in better matters? When he is to worship a stone, to observe the numerous ceremonies of a foolish feast, to do reverence to a false god, he can show wit enough; and therefore why do you tell me that he is simple and silly, and capable of nothing, when I would have him seek after the will of the true God? Fie upon you! I wonder you have the face to speak these things. There is no such matter: it cannot be as you say. Let me never hear you talk thus vainly any more, nor excuse yourselves and others in this fashion. Their simpleness is not in fault, but their idleness and sloth ought to bear the blame. For I pray you once more consider, who were more rustic, plain and simple; those that lived in Abraham's time, or the men of our days? It is plain that they. And when was it easier to be godly; then, or now? It is manifest that now. For now God is more clearly revealed; now the gospel is preached; now we are taught by the Son of God himself: but then men learnt, as one may say, without any teacher. There was an universal corruption; no lawgiver, no prophets sent, no miracles wrought: but they saw as it were in a profound darkness, in a winter moonless night. Well then, why shouldst not thou be religious as well or rather more than Abraham? He was of that noble and generous spirit which is recorded in the holy books, when he had not so much as that which we call the *wisdom of them without*[e], and there were no philosophers in the world. Then I say he knew God, he wrought righteousness, he exercised virtue, he drew on others to be godly. Nay, his father was an idolater, his friends and kindred were immersed in the evil

[d] [Jer. xxxi. 34; Hebr. viii. 11.]
[e] [1 Cor. v. 13; Col. iv. 5; 1 Thess. iv. 12; 1 Tim. iii. 7.]

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customs of the world, and yet all this could not hinder him from becoming good, and obeying the call of God. It cannot then be impossible for us who live in the clear daylight, both to know and do his will: but it is impossible, utterly impossible, that he should leave them without his almighty grace, who are vigilant and watchful to attend to the illuminations which he bestows upon them. Never think hereafter to make apologies for yourselves before God, seeing you are not able to answer for your sluggishness before men. They condemn you, and he will never acquit you. It is visible you may be better, and therefore he will admit of no excuse for your continuing bad."

This is the effect of the sermon which that excellent man made to drones and sluggards: and let me again beseech you to lay his words to heart. Do not content yourselves with wishes and desires; no, nor with ardent prayers that you may be amended; but apply yourselves to the work, stir up the grace that is in you, and do what your hands find to do with all your might. They are the souls whose prayers God hears, who employ their hands as soon as they have unbent their knees. The diligent and the stirring men are those whom he comes to assist. A man may work wonders, but not if he lie in a bed. Heaven will pour down abundance of grace, but not if we gape for it at home, and will not go out of doors to receive it. You have heard, it is like, of the thundering legion for whom God fought; but yet they did not obtain the victory with their arms across: they were fain to give blows, as well as believe, and to second their prayers with their swords. We may praise the fertile soil, and pray for seasonable showers; but let me tell you, no rain fructifies more than the dew of sweat. Though the ship waits for a favourable gale, and cannot stir without it; yet it is still becalmed without that breath wherewith they hoist the sails, and spread them to receive it.

It would be too long to tell you what commotions the poor men felt in their breasts all the time that he was speaking; but thus much you may know, that they began to be so awakened, and seemed so much ashamed, that he thought it best to strike again while the iron was hot, and his words had such fair hopes to make a deeper impression. To this discourse therefore he added another, which he conceived might give a

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greater force unto it; and was of this import. But lest, said he, you should imagine this eminent person, whose sense of things I have conveyed to you, to have measured the strength of other men by his own great abilities; I will read a lecture out of a philosopher [n] to you, who is able to say enough to make you shake off your sloth, and cannot be suspected of more knowledge than may be the portion of Christ's disciples. And I persuade myself that you cannot for shame despise his words, lest he having nobler thoughts than yourselves should serve to condemn you of the grossest stupidity.

You have all, I am sure, a very strong desire of something that is good; and, not contented with any inferior degree, you all long for that which is supreme, and hath nothing above it. "Now God," saith he, "and goodness are so near of kin that they are convertible, and you cannot find the one, but you must have the other also. Wheresoever you can meet with the essence of God (he means a participation of him) there is the essence of good. What then is the essence of God? where shall we find his nature? Is this flesh the thing we inquire after? Far be such a thought from us. Is that field, or those manors? Away with such an absurd conceit. Is fame, is glory? No such matter. What then? Is mind and understanding, knowledge and wisdom, right reason and sound apprehensions? Yes, this is the thing we look for: here we find God, and therefore here let us seek for the nature of good. He is nowhere else to be met withal, and therefore let us go no further to be happy. For else why dost thou not seek for this good in a plant? why dost thou not expect to find it in a brute? These and all other creatures are indeed the works of God, but they are not the principal and chief; they are not a part of him, they are not the things wherein he hath engraven himself, and wrought his own image. It is thou that art the prime of his creatures; that art his masterpiece: nay, thou art (as I may say) a piece of God; thou hast in thyself a portion of divinity. Why then art thou so ignorant of thy nobility? why dost thou forget so shamefully from whence thou art derived? Is it fit for thee to seek thy happiness in meat and drink, in money and lands, in honour and applause? Why dost thou disparage thy soul so

[n] [Epict. in Arrian. lib. ii. cap. 8. p. 187.]

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much as to go for thy good any further than thyself; there is God, and there thou must enjoy thy good. It is not any thing in the world that thou art to mind, so much as thy soul; for in that is to be found the satisfaction of thy desires. Why dost thou not remember then, when thou eatest, who thou art that eatest, and whom thou feedest? When thou usest any thing in the world, who art thou that usest it? And when thou dost any thing, who it is that doth it. Art thou altogether insensible of the excellence of the person whom thou feedest, and who is here sent into the world to be trained up by thee? O wretch that thou art, how comes it about that thou art so ignorant of this, that thou carriest God about with thee? Or dost thou think that I speak of a god without thee? A god of gold or silver, to be borne on thy shoulders! Thou carriest him in thyself, man; and yet regardest not, though thou dost pollute him with filthy thoughts, and besmear him with sordid and nasty actions. If there be a statue, a lifeless image of God before thine eyes, a picture of him in stone, thou darest not do any undecent thing before it. But God himself being present within, seeing all things, and hearing all things, thou blushest not, O thou hated of God, to think and do most unworthily, being altogether insensible of thy own nature. If one could suppose thee to be a statue made by Phidias, (Minerva, for instance, or Jupiter), wouldst thou not, if we could also suppose thee to have any sense, be very mindful of thyself, and of the workman, and do nothing either unbecoming his art or thy own excellence? And now that thou art made even by Heaven itself, now that thou art the workmanship of God, what is the reason that thou carest not after what manner thou behavest thyself? Is not that image which is made by man, of stone or brass, or of gold and ivory at the best? And where it is set up first, there it stands for ever, without stirring one foot of itself from the place. But who can tell me of what that image of God is made, which he fashioned with his own hands? What the price of it is, itself cannot understand. And yet it stirs and moves; it hath a spirit, and can go whither it will; it ranges about the world, and cannot be limited by all that it sees; it hath a knowledge of good and evil, a reason and judgment whereby to estimate things. And therefore since thou art the fabric of such an artist, since thou art such an excellent piece,

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why dost thou disgrace, why dost thou undervalue thyself? Why, I say? seeing thou art not only formed by him, but he hath given thee credit above all other creatures; he hath deposited many rare gifts in thy hands, and entrusted thee alone with a great deal of his wealth. Wilt thou not be mindful of this neither, but betray thy trust, and abuse and embezzle his goods which he hath committed to thy charge? If one should commit an orphan, a poor fatherless and motherless child to thy care, wouldst thou be so negligent of him? Bethink thyself then; he hath committed to thee thyself; he hath judged none so faithful, none so fit to be trusted as thee. Keep me this, saith he, just as it is. See that this be preserved in safety, and delivered back again unto me, modest and bashful, honest and just, sober and temperate, heavenly and sublime, strong and courageous, peaceful and undisturbed, contented and well pleased; in one word, such as I made it. What a piece of infidelity then, what dishonesty and falseness is it, that thou wilt not at all guard and secure it! What will he say unto thee, when he sees it so horridly abused as we now behold the souls of men? What canst thou expect to be the reward of such treachery, which of all other is the greatest?"

But I should tire you, I doubt, if I should proceed to the end of this man's lecture; and I have repeated enough of it to make all your souls blush at that gross and supine negligence, which makes them obnoxious to the lash of heathens. And if you would deal freely and clearly, can you say that you never heard your souls complain that they are thus slighted? Did they never quarrel with you for your forgetfulness and contempt of them? Are they not apt to murmur and repine that they can receive no higher satisfaction than the brutes enjoy? And do they not remember you that they are of an heavenly descent, of the kindred of angels, made after the likeness of God himself? O that you would but listen to them! they will fill your ears, I am sure, with such sad lamentations as will make them tingle. They will tell you it is unsufferable that they should be thus neglected and disregarded: they will chide you for bestowing the care that is due to them upon other inconsiderable things: they will reproach to you most bitterly this sleepiness and carnal security wherein I find you. And

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can you be so cruel to them as, after so many complaints, to let them have no redress? Must they still suffer these wrongs and abuses which have been long offered to them? Will you harden your hearts against the cries and clamours of your own souls? If there be any spark of good nature remaining in them, they are mollified to the piteous whinings and the mournful accents of a poor dog that is accidentally shut up and almost starved in a lonesome place, and begs for a release. How can they refuse then to relent at their own doleful cries and miserable complaints? How can they hear, without some tenderness, their own sad sighs and deep groans after a better good than this world affords? Will you not suffer them to be set at liberty after so long restraint? Will you not permit them to go to their own kindred, to return to their native country when they are so desirous of it? Will you deny them the freedom to think continually of their own proper happiness, and contrive a sure way wherein to attain it? Be not so unnatural, do not so forget yourselves; but let your souls have free leave to pursue their desires. Yea, give them opportunity every day to look abroad beyond the body and this present world: or rather invite them to take the freedom to go to God as oft as they please. And when you find them so unmindful of themselves as now they seemed to be, when they are so heavy that they begin to fall asleep, awake them, and stir them up again; rouse them from their slumber, and bid them remember their dignity, and take great heed that they be not gulled with the flatteries and enchantments of the world and of the flesh.

And truly there is very great need of this watchfulness, for the flesh will be soliciting your attendance, and desire you to make provision for it. It will complain of your neglects too, and be angry that it is not more kindly used. It will grudge at all the time and care that is bestowed on your soul, and say it is too much. You must expect that it will murmur at the commands of Christ, and think itself very much injured by them. But as you must not regard these complaints, so I will tell you a way whereby you shall cease them, and make it better satisfied. Let it know that if it will not be content with what you do, it shall have worse usage than hitherto. Tell it that you

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will not have so much kindness for it unless it will be quiet. Persuade it that it is better to consent unto obedience sooner, for else it shall fare more hardly, and you will take a severer course to bring it under. For so I have read that Hilarion, an ancient pilgrim, was wont to do. When he found his flesh to be much displeased that it was denied any thing, he insulted over it on this fashion: "Thou ass! canst thou not tell when thou art well, and hast but a light burden upon thy back? I will make thee that thou shalt not kick again in haste. I will lay such loads upon thee that thou shalt stand quietly and have no power to wince. And I will not feed thee with corn, but with straw. I will punish thee with hunger and thirst. I will afflict thee with fasting, and bring thee low with harder labours. I will make thee think more of thy meat than of gluttony and riot. Thou shalt be glad of a drop of drink, and rest well content without compotations and excess of wine. Thou hadst better have been more moderate in thy desires, for I will teach thee to be well-pleased with a sparer diet. It had been more for thine ease if thou hadst been more diligent; for I will cure thee of thy sloth by exacting of thee more grievous tasks[a]."

In this manner he quieted and stilled all its grumblings, and affrighted away its reluctance and idle disposition. And in the same way may you bring it to some reason, and make it capable of good advice, lest, by craving too much, it have the less; and by encroaching upon the better part, it lose the freedom that it doth enjoy. Terrify yourselves with the thoughts of severer discipline, which you must be forced to use; and represent to yourselves effectually, that if there be no other way, this sluggish temper must be banished by a rigorous and sharp penance, which you can less endure than this easy service of our Lord. By this means, sure, you will procure liberty for your souls to follow their nobler propensions, and to provide for their return into their own country and their father's house. Which if you mean to effect, then you must take more time, whatsoever the flesh or the world shall object, to consider more seriously the worth and price of your souls, than which I know not what can be more powerful

[a] [S. Hieron. in vit. S. Hilarionis, tom. ii. col. 15 D.]

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to drive away your sleep, and to make you attend with all earnestness to the securing of their happiness. Remember, I again beseech you, that it is too long that you have remained in ignorance of yourselves: that it is high time now to look about you, lest your souls quite forget themselves, and never recover the memory of what and whence they are. Let my counsel therefore be acceptable to you, and revolve very often in your mind the words of that heathen whom I have brought hither to make you ashamed. Retire much into yourselves, and there demand of your souls that they declare their quality and condition to you. They are able to make you an answer, and therefore bid them tell you what is their parentage and kindred, of what house they are descended, what is their nature, their portion, their inheritance; and do not cease till you have received satisfaction. Ask them if they are not the daughters of God, sisters to angels, images of divinity. Hearken if they will not tell you that they are spirits of a vast understanding, purer than the light, swifter than the lightning; whose portion and dowry is immortality, whose place is the universe, whose capacity is a picture of infinity, and who are born to be heirs of the other world, to have the honour of being kings, and to reign with God for ever. And when your souls have dealt faithfully with you, and let you know such things as these, you must be as faithful and just to them, and assure them that you will have a great care of them, and attend upon them according to their birth and quality. Think what a madness it is to throw away this nobler moiety of man for that which no discreet person would purchase with the loss of his health, or the price of the pains of the far inferior part. Let every one of you say within himself, O my soul, I will never be persuaded to lose thee; nothing shall tempt me to be false unto thee. This body shall be hungry and starved, nay, and die too, if it were possible, a thousand deaths rather than I will famish thee, and suffer thee to perish. I have resolved thou shalt have thy true liberty, and pursue thy true end for which thou wast made. Look about thee, and see what thou wouldst have, and by the grace of God it shall not be denied to thy desires. And what is it, I beseech you, O you sons of men, or rather, you sons of God, you children of the Most High, what is it that you are most desirous to enjoy? Is it not

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the knowledge of God, to be acquainted with your Father, to recover his image, to be impressed with his likeness, to live in his love, to have the light of his countenance, to be full of good hopes of receiving his blessing, and to be restored at last to his presence after this long banishment from him? O gratify your souls then, so far as to give all diligence to fulfil these reasonable longings. Be not sparing of your pains in so great a business. Let them not be put off with frivolous excuses, that you are not at leisure, that you have other things to mind for the convenience of your bodies, or any the like pretences; but instantly apply yourselves more vigorously than ever to see that they have right done them, and that they receive their true and full satisfaction. Do not think it such a small matter that will content them as the whole world. Nay, do not imagine that it will suffice them to talk of the other world; to send some messages to it, and receive some from it. It is not enough that they speak now and then with the Father of their being; and that they have his word, and hear him speaking to them. But they must have a greater communication with them both than this amounts unto. They must set their affections on things above: they must have their conversation in heaven: they must be like to God, and made partakers of a divine nature. They must be renewed after the image of him that created them, in wisdom, in righteousness, in purity, in charity and love, so that God may dwell in them, and they in him. No less good than this must you design for your souls. You do not act like reasonable beings till you seek, by all means, this conformity with your Original from whence you spring. Do you doubt at all of what I say? Let me send you then to that philosopher again, that you may blush once more to see yourselves in greater ignorance than those whom you reproach with the name of infidels.

"Diogenes," saith he[a], "hearing a sophister once making a vain-glorious declamation, put forth his middle finger, and pointed at him, saying; See, there is the man: behold him, for that is he: now you may look upon him, and know him if you will. At which words there being a great stir and tumult excited, he proceeded thus in his speech unto them. Do you

[a] [Arrian. in Epict.] l. iii. c. 2. [p. 267.]

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think that I show you a man as we do a stone or a log, only with the indication of my finger? No, I have no such meaning: it is a folly to think of distinguishing a man from his neighbour by such an instrument. But when one hath shown you his opinions that he hath of things, when he hath demonstrated to you what are his great concerns; then he hath shown him to you as he is a man. And from thence now you may take this man's character whom you have heard speaking to you. He hath told you what he thinks, and what he most desires: I only bid you to mark and observe him. Let us see thy opinions and notions also, (saith the philosopher, who makes application of this story;) let us behold thy sentiments, that we may be acquainted with thee. Discover to us what thou lovest and choosest above all other things. Dost thou place thy happiness without thyself? dost thou value all things more than thyself? Thou readest the best philosophers, thou studiest Chrysippus, and such good authors; and this is all. Why, then, we see very well who thou art. Hast thou not discovered to us in what esteem we are to hold thee? A poor-spirited creature, angry and furious, fearful and distrustful, querulous and complaining of every thing, proud and conceited of thyself, covetous and voluptuous, desirous of glory and popular applause, accusing all things, and never quiet nor at rest. These things thou showest us; and by these we are to esteem thee. It is not thy books, nor thy masters and tutors, nor any thing else, but such as these that show the man."

And what, I beseech you, can be more proper to be spoken in the ears of most Christian auditories? You read the Bible; you have the books of Christian learning in your hands. Do these denominate you Christian men and women? Must we call you the disciples of our Saviour, because you sit before us and hear our sermons? No such matter: show us, O man, thy thoughts; show us thy decrees and opinions of things. Let us see thy understanding, thy will, thy choice, thy affections; that we may know whether thou art a Christian or no. And where shall we see these but in the actions of thy life? Covetousness and love of pleasure tell us plainly what thou art. Pride and study to be admired in the world proclaim thee to us more than all that we see beside. If thou wilt give a proof

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of thy humanity, and of thy Christianity too; if thou wilt have us believe that thou art not yet turned an unreasonable creature; live according to thy reason: practise thy religion; prefer thy soul before thy body, the concernments of an immortal being before the trivial enjoyments of a few moments. Do not tell us of thy professions, nor of thy belief, when we see with our eyes that which better declares thee to us. Let thy soul recover its command again; let it be restored to its empire and dominion; let it rule all the passions and affections of the lower part, that we may know thou art a man, and not degenerated into a beast.

And now by this time you may well think these pilgrims were awakened, unless they meant to snore eternally. And indeed the poor men were so warmed, or rather inflamed with this discourse, that they could refrain themselves no longer, but burst forth into a passionate weeping; first for their fault, and then for joy, that God had sent them so faithful a monitor. They gave him most hearty thanks for his excellent sermon, (as they could not choose but call it,) and promised most solemnly to think more of the value of their souls, and thereby excite themselves to use their best diligence to save them. We will go, said they, to the Father of our spirits: we will make it our constant endeavour to reconcile ourselves to him. We will say, Father, we have sinned against heaven, and against thee; we have sinned against ourselves. We have wronged our own souls; we are no more worthy to be called thy sons: no, not worthy of so much as to be called the sons of men. We have lived like brutes; we have spoiled thy workmanship, and miserably effaced and mangled thine image. But we repent, and remember from whence we are fallen. We are desirous now of nothing so much as to be conformed to thyself. O let us be thy servants, if we are not worthy to be called thy children. Admit us but into the lowest place in thy family, to the meanest degree of thy love. And if that be too good a name for us, to be styled thy servants, we are willing to be thy vassals, thy bondsmen, any thing that thou wilt have us. For we are the captives of thy mighty and all-conquering love, and we shall think ourselves happy if we may sit in the most inferior rank of those that shall eternally sing thy praises.

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CHAP. XXXI.

How the pilgrim was falling into the contrary extreme, and was prevented by his director. Of the necessity of discretion; and the assistance which one virtue gives another. How he was troubled that he should have any passions. Of the use of them. That it is fit for us to love our friends passionately, and to take great delight in their company.

In such ardent effusions as these they a long time unloaded themselves of the passions which they felt in their hearts; which being all vented, there still remained a very great one for this good man, which they were not able to utter. Very sorry they were that it was not possible for them always to accompany him; and when they took their leave, it was with so many fresh tears and vows of never forgetting his instructions, that he thought his stay with them promoted him more in his way to Jerusalem than many other long days' journeys. Nor was our young pilgrim without his share in the benefit of this discourse, being hereby excited to bestir himself with more earnestness and greater zeal in the service of God. He never thought that he was vigilant enough; he looked about him as if he had seen with an hundred eyes, and he was as busy as if he had been master of as many hands. And, to be short, he was in danger to throw himself into the other extreme, by an unbridled and headlong kind of fervour, which carried him to attempt and undertake more than he was able to perform. Which the good man espying, and considering that it would soon tire him, and so bring him into a new trouble; he told him, that, to make their way seem less tedious, he would entertain him a little with a story of one of the pilgrims in former days. You have heard, said he, I believe, of a famous person in Egypt called St. Anthony, who led a life so holy, that there were few places into which his name did not come, and from whence some or other did not go to behold so rare an example of perfect virtue. Among others, there were certain monks on a time went to him to confer about divine matters; and they were so earnest in a dispute which arose among

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them, that it lasted from the beginning of the night to the next day morning. The thing under debate was this, as John Cassian tells us[b]:—What virtue or what observance is it, that may be thought of greatest efficacy to preserve a monk in perpetual safety from diabolical snares and deceits, and to lead him in the best way, and with greatest freedom, to the top of perfection? For the resolution of which doubt, each one, according to his capacity, produced what he thought to be most available. Some there were who placed all in fastings and watchings; alleging for proof hereof, that a man being extenuated hereby, and made very pure in soul and body, may more easily come to be united with God. Others preferred entire poverty before those, and said that a total contempt of all worldly things was the only security of man; in regard the mind being naked and quite stripped of all those impediments becomes more light and enlarged, and may speedily mount to the heavenly enjoyments. But there were a third sort who gave the palm to the love of solitude, and commended the deserts as the only places wherein to come to familiarity with God, and to hold a perpetual communication with his infinite goodness. Nor were they wanting who, with a great deal of reason, preferred the works of mercy and brotherly charity before all other exercises whatsoever; affirming that nothing would give us so good a title to the kingdom of heaven, nor more readily bring us thither. Thus every one having unfolded his mind, and enlarged himself as much as he pleased in proof of his own opinion, the greater part of the night was consumed before it came to St. Anthony's turn to speak, who delivered himself in manner following:

"It cannot be denied, my reverend brethren, but that the propositions by you now made are of singular force to keep a man's heart with God, and to bring him to a most excellent degree of virtue. But yet to rely principally on their sufficiency, innumerable reasons and events also, occurring to divers persons, will not permit me. I have been a man of some observation, and many have I seen in my time that were given to wondrous abstinence from meat and sleep; that were

[b] [Collat. ii. cap. 2. p. 238.]

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retired from all human society; addicted in such sort to poverty, as not to reserve a penny for themselves, or a loaf of bread for the future; some always at their devotion, others employed in acts of hospitality, and succouring of their neighbours; who, nevertheless, fell at last into such errors and illusions, that their end proved nothing answerable to their magnanimous beginnings. So that I conceive the best way to know what will advance us in our design of enjoying God more perfectly, and put us in possession of that state we aspire unto, is to search into the occasion of the ruin and perdition of those unhappy ones. Most certain it is, they had been gathering together a notable treasure of good and holy works. What was it then which made it waste away and come to nothing? surely the only lack of discretion. They had not sufficiently learned the rules and conditions of this virtue, which, shunning either extremes, maintains us continually upon the high-way: neither letting us be carried away with the right hand of spiritual consolations, to superfluous and unmeasurable fervours, nor yet with the left of dryness, and want of spiritual gust, under colour of care of the body, to fall into sloth and sensuality. This discretion is that which our Lord calls the *eye* and lamp *of the body*, which being clear and simple, the whole body will be replenished with light; but being dim, there will be nothing but darkness. To this faculty it belongs to weigh, balance, and discern all that is to be done by man; and therefore if this be faulty, and true judgment and knowledge be wanting, the soul must needs be folded up in a night of inordinate and blind passions."

To this, as there was reason, they all gave their applause, there being many other things added to confirm this assertion, which it is not pertinent to relate. It is lawful now for me to cast in my suffrage also, and to tell you, that this discretion is it alone which can make our fastings and vigils profitable, by directing to the right measure, and the due season of them. It will teach us not to abstain when there is need we should eat; and not call it religion to be miserably sick. It will learn us to regard the end; and not fast in zeal, but for nothing else. And when we do fast in obedience to them above us, it will let us understand that their laws are not satisfied, but when the

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intention and purpose of them can be observed. This also is it which will make retirement useful, by drawing us out of it upon fit occasions. This will make us poor without becoming beggars; and fervent in devotion without blazing away in the fierceness of our own flames. It will direct us so to give away our goods that we may be always giving; and to succour our neighbours, so that we may not be weary of well doing: to communicate common benefits with all, and peculiar benefits with choice; and to take care (as wise men have said) that in making the portraiture, we do not spoil this pattern; and in feeding the streams, we dry not up the fountain. For God hath made the love of ourselves the pattern whereby we are to love our neighbours; and we shall not be good to them long, if we mind not first our own concerns. It is the virtue which hinders us from spoiling a good design through rashness and haste. It keeps us from tripping up our own heels by running too fast. It keeps us from being tired, while it keeps us from taking too long, though continued journeys. It keeps us always at our work, by keeping us from over-working ourselves. It makes religion easy and pleasant, by making it free and unconstrained. It brings religion so much into our love, that it will never fall into our hatred. It preserves us from destroying the body, while we are labouring to save the soul. It feeds the soul without any gluttony, and saves it from nauseating spiritual things, by providing that it take no surfeit of them. It conducts our affairs with more temper, and less rumour; with more effects, and less show. It makes us zealous without rashness; and excites us to do good to ourselves without prejudicing the good of others. It quenches the furious heat which affrights the wicked, and discourages the weak, and upbraids the soberness of those who are strong. It shows that it is possible at once to be religious, and yet wise. It adorns the gospel, and is a great grace and ornament to him that wears it. It commends piety to the world, and doth not impair it in ourselves. It gives a lustre to all the virtues, and they borrow their beauty from it. And in one word, it is at least their handmaid, which must ever wait upon them, or else they will dishonour themselves.

Our young pilgrim, you discern by this time, was a man of

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so much wit, that he could not but see the design of this story, and think that it had an aim at himself. And being very much cooled and refreshed by this charitable breath which the father had spent upon him, he instantly apprehended that he had contrived to give him a divertisement and an instruction both together. For some time he could do nothing else but commend this virtue; till at last he remembered there was some praise due to the father, who had given him now such an instance of it. And having rendered him his thanks, both for the lesson and the seasonableness of it, he assured him that he would never travel without this discretion about him. No more you had need, said his companion; for though I called her only the handmaid of the virtues, yet in truth she seems to be a mistress among them, and to dispose them to their several duties. For one virtue, you must know, is in need of its neighbour, and cannot live alone. They must help one another continually, or else they will be very lame and defective. They must lend to each other a mutual support, or else they will be in danger of falling to the ground. Meekness must lend its hand to zeal, and zeal must do as much for it again; or else the one will be but fire, and the other will be but phlegm. Seriousness must be beholden to cheerfulness; and cheerfulness must call to be repaid by it, or else we shall be either all earth, or nothing but air. Humility wants a little confidence; an holy faith must be joined with some fear; an high generosity and great courage is very imperfect without modesty; and a severe justice must be acquainted with sweetness and complacence: or if the one should refuse the other this assistance, it will feel such a want itself, that it will be forced to beg that which it doth deny. But what is it, I beseech you, that pairs and links them thus together, and makes them do this mutual service, unless it be the discretion and judgment which the holy man recommended to you? This superintends over all, and issues forth her directions and orders to them: which if they be not obeyed, they do most hurt where we intended the greatest good; and they run to the borders of vice, when we designed the highest degree of virtue. This makes a sweet mixture of faith in God with fear of ourselves; of godly sorrow with spiritual joy; of innocence with prudence; of lowliness with greatness of mind; of heavenly-mindedness with diligence in our callings; of

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delight in God with a pleasure in our friends, and those who are good. It teaches us to discourse, and not to be talkative; to be silent, but not melancholy; to be content with what we have, but not be idle; to labour, but not be impatient: to bear a dear affection to our friends, but not to their faults; to reprove others, and not incur a reproof ourselves by undue severity towards them.

Enough, said the pilgrim; I see such need of this virtue, that you may be confident I shall never be willing to be without its company. But truly I think it must be your discretion more than mine own that will be my security; for I have been, you see, afflicted with such contrary passions, that I am ready to wish that I had none at all. There is not one of those that I have about me, but it is sometimes such a trouble to me, that I should think myself more happy if I were wholly deprived of them. They are so strong and violent, so boisterous and turbulent, that if they do not overtop my reason, yet I cannot overcome them without suffering a great tumult and disorder. What should we do with things which it is so hard to rule? Were it not better to discharge them all, since there needs more discretion than I am master of to keep them?

The good man was a little troubled to hear him speak after this sort, and asked him with a greater quickness than he was wont to use, Would you then be well pleased if I should bring a scythe and mow off your legs? Had you rather be carried than go upon your feet? The poor man was amazed at this question, and asked him what he meant. My meaning, said the father, is plain enough. Your passions are nothing else but those motions of your soul whereby you go to that good, or run away from that evil, which your understanding presents to your heart. You would be so far from being happy by being deprived of them, that I maintain you could not be happy at all without them. A tree would be as happy as you, if you had no desire, nor love, nor hope, nor none of the rest of their company. And therefore you may as well desire to have no feet, or to have a dead palsy smite your loins, and disable you to move, as wish to have no passions, or to have them so benumbed and stupified, that you shall not

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feel them. We must not pluck out our eyes for fear they be abused with unworthy spectacles, nor stand stock still for fear of falling, nor always stay at home because the weather may prove rainy. Nay, when did you see any excellent virtue which was not accompanied with a plentiful portion of these? Or when was there any love, or courage, or any such like thing in a noble degree, but you might discern it edged with no small passionateness of spirit? And do not think that our passions are of little use; for it is plain they are good for more purposes than one. There is at least a double end for which they serve. They first incite and dispose the soul to seek those things which are good and necessary for us; and then, secondly, they fortify and conserve us in this disposition, and make us to persist in our inclinations to those things which are profitable for us; the thoughts of which else might easily be blotted out. They stir you up, and bring you to that good which objects itself to your mind; and then they impress it there, and cause it to stay with your soul. For you cannot but observe that those things which move you with any passion when you see or think of them, do stick longest in your mind; and those with which you are not affected are but little remembered.

All your business then is (and in that you must bestow some pains) to get better eyes to guide you in your goings, and not to endeavour that you may not stir at all. You must study, I mean, to understand the true difference between good and evil, to be able to judge what is fit for you, and what not; what good can certainly be attained, and what evil avoided; and what is quite without the limits of our power: and then how is it blamable if you be carried with a great passion to the one and from the other; do not think all things to be evil which the world calls by that name: nor admire the goodness of any thing above its price; nor follow that zealously which you are in doubt whether or no it can be attained; and then your passions will be so far from being your masters, that in fear of that you will not refrain to use their service. And if you should chance to be surprised with a fancy of some evil or good before you can have liberty to discourse the true nature of it, and your passions hereby become very strong, and are

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raised to a greater height than you would have them; there is no reason to be troubled, for none can prevent these sudden assaults, nor can they be quelled without some scuffle within. If you can conquer, you have well acquitted yourself: and that will be attended with those triumphs which will more than recompense the trouble of those furious and rebellious commotions. You will not think those things bad, without which there could not be such a brave and noble thing as victory is.

Be content then, I beseech you, to be of the race of Adam, and do not affect some higher original. Go not about to destroy one half of yourself by labouring to be free from all passion: for they that undertake this, (as hath been well said by those before us,) instead of making a good man, do only raise a statue. In order to make a man wise, and live in peace, they turn him into a dead and insensible image. These kind of images (say they) are more suitable for the ornaments of the porch than for the uses of life. And if we be not blind, we may discern between hardness and softness a middle temperament, which is called solidity and firmness.

The pilgrim was so much pleased with these words, that he could scarce forbear to hug him when they were ended. And his passions having found such a defender to take their part, were ready to serve themselves but too much of this friendly discourse in their behalf. I love you infinitely, said he, clasping about his neck, or, to speak more moderately, I love you above all earthly things. There is no music can be so charming to me as your words. They can both appease my raging humours and excite me out of my dull and phlegmatic inclinations. You are my intelligence, my tutelar angel, the good genius of my soul, without whom, I think, I should either have no passions or nothing else. Go on, I beseech you, to oblige me, and to make me, if it be possible, more in love with you. Be not weary of the charge you have undertaken; and do not despair neither, but in your company I may learn more discretion to govern those passions, which, I see, must not be rooted out.

When he had vented this passion of love as much as he

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pleased, and was capable to attend to some new discourse, the father thought it not unseasonable to ask him if he did not begin already to repent of all those embraces which he had bestowed upon him. Nay, do not wonder, pursued he, at this demand, for I do not intend to question the greatness of your love, but, by what I have observed, I believe you may be afraid that it ought not to be so great. I have long taken notice that you are so scrupulous as not to dare to trust your own soul, nor rely upon the credit of your severest reason. Though you think it is impossible but that there should be such motions as you feel, and know yourself to be of such a complexion, that if you will love at all, it must be with a passionateness and fervency of affection; yet, upon the next ebullition (as I may call it) in your soul, you are ready to condemn yourself, and to quit those maxims of reason which you took to be infallible. I know, my friend, that there is in this a pardonable, or rather commendable niceness of soul, a delicacy and tenderness of conscience which would not in the least offend him; but, it must be confessed, that there is something of weakness and unsettledness of mind in it also which dare not adhere to its own conclusions. We are not to let a sudden fancy shake that which is so well and rationally established: or rather we are to ponder those things so long, and to settle ourselves so strongly in our reasons, which are the ballast of our souls, that we shall never desert them upon the pretence of any pious fears lest we should displease God. To suffer ourselves to love any person that is amiable very much, or put any such like case, is it justifiable, or is it not? If not; away with all these passions, and dig them up. But if you will have them remain, be not angry that they grow and blossom, and bring forth fruit, and produce it in abundance.

And a little the more to confirm your mind, let me say something to you of that tenderness of affection which I observe in you towards a virtuous friend; that inclination which you have to be with him, and especially of that pleasantness and mirth you are apt to yield unto in the company of those you love. You think perhaps that this is too much, and that you take too great a liberty of pleasing yourself. But, I beseech you, did you ever observe any great virtue in those cold

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creatures, or rather in those morose and austere natures who judge it a crime to love their friends with any passion; to feel a joy in their approach; to talk pleasantly in their company, and to use with them a freedom of discourse? Are they more innocent than others because they say nothing? Must we let them wear the title of virtue above their neighbours merely because they are more grave and solemn? Do they live in a greater sense of God because they look more sourly? Must we think there is no piety but what is palefaced? no mortification of ourselves but when our thorns prick other folks? Truly, I must needs profess that I have seen both men and women of this rigid humour, whose very looks condemn all that is named pleasure, and will not afford you so much as a smile; who, I am confident, are not half so harmless and innocent as those who profess a more open and cheerful conversation with their friends. Some of these, I have observed, are so parsimonious and niggardly, that they are sordid rather than saving. Others are so curst and peevish that they will snarl on the least occasion that crosses their humour. And you will find few of them who have not these two qualities; that they love good cheer dearly, and are glad to meet with a feast. Let a man eat excessively, so he do it gravely, it is no offence. And, secondly, that they love to censure others, and to pass harsh judgment upon very innocent actions. Nay, which is most villainous, there are some of them who will condemn you for that good cheer which you bestowed upon them, and which they themselves commended in the eating. They will say afterward that you love ostentation, and that half of it might have been spared. They will reprehend this and that as superfluous, and say, they doubt you are too much affected to the vanities of the world. Besides, they love to pry into every body's secrets. They would know what is done in all their neighbours' houses; and, if it were possible, they would look into their very closets. And, whatsoever they pretend, they take a strange pleasure to tattle of these things in their own conventicles; and some of them would be dumb if they were not provided with such discourse when they meet together.

But, to speak as favourably as may be, I am much inclinable to this opinion, that it is not their wisdom, but their weakness

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which makes them reserved. They are not serious, but only sour; nor mortified, but morose. It is the savageness of their natures which makes them hate all the pleasantness and mirth which others use in society. They have not made themselves of a better habit than their neighbours, but were born with a worse disposition. They are so leavened with a sour humour, that they have no room to entertain any of the sweet and delightsome passions. You think they hate all pleasures out of virtue, but it is rather from their temper. It is not their power, but their inability. They distaste them not because they have a perfection of judgment, but because they want a palate. And therefore they ought not to think better of themselves, nor be thought so by others, merely because they taste no joy in that which pleases you; for it may proceed from the lumpishness of their body, and not from the weight of their reasons; they may owe it to their parents, and not to their own choice. Or, grant that they do deny themselves in those things, yet it is very well if it be not to take a license in those which are worse: for many debar themselves of innocent mirth, and grant an indulgence to their froward and peevish humours. Provided they be grave, they think they may be discourteous: and as long as they do not laugh, they will take the liberty to bite.

I am not, you see by my complexion, inclined much to mirth, and therefore not likely, out of any natural humour, to be their enemy. But, for my part, I must tell you plainly, that I both dislike and suspect these sullen gravities. The people of a cheerful disposition are more innocent in thought, more free from design, more simple and plain hearted, more kind and affectionate, more free from superstition, and far removed from hypocrisy: nay, if I had added that they are more modest too I had not been mistaken; for their modesty is in the heart, and the others' oftentimes but in the brow and exterior part. But I think it is time to dismiss these lowering countenances, whom I intend not to reproach, but only to bereave of the opinion and reputation of being owners of more goodness than other men. They are to be pitied, methinks, who use their reason to make themselves unreasonable; who with no small passion seem to me to speak against all our passions; and who

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think well of themselves for that which is our fault, or their imperfection. But whatsoever kindness any may have for them, I must acknowledge myself to have a spirit more tender; I am not ashamed to be thought a man of sense, and that have some feeling both of pain and of pleasure. Let them call, if they list, all our passions infirmities, yet (as a wise man once said) I rather choose to enjoy this weakness than their stoutness and strength, and to be sick of this disease than to have their kind of health.

CHAP. XXXII.

How they lit upon a company of select friends, who were met at a frugal but handsome dinner. The commendation of Temperance. Of the pleasure that friends enjoy in eating together. The benefit of friendship: with the character of a true friend.

In such discourse as this they passed with much pleasure a long stage of their journey. At the end of which, being thirsty, they called at a place where one would think that Heaven designed to give the pilgrim an example of innocent pleasure: for here they found a knot of loving neighbours at a frugal dinner; who seemed to feast one another more with their mutual good conversation than with any other cheer that was provided. Their eyes told that they were very merry; and that there was a true love in their hearts, their countenance and free converse did plainly declare. There was nothing superfluous, but all very handsome; no looseness, but great freedom; no noise, but much innocent pleasure. They were disposed to mirth rather than joy, to cheerfulness rather than jollity, and to entertain themselves with a grateful variety rather than abundance of meat and drink. This sight did very much affect the young man's heart; and when they were gone he began to speak in the praise of temperance, and to commend their happiness who could contain themselves within the limits of sobriety. For this, said he, is the mistress of health, and also of wise and pure thoughts. It refreshes the body, and doth not burden the mind: it casts down neither of them to the ground, but raises both to their just pitch of pleasure: it continues us free and fit for any employment, but especially that of thanking God for all his blessings, which is the noblest

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of all: it leaves us capable to enjoy the things of the other world, when we have enjoyed as much as we please of this: it suffers reason to retain its throne, or rather exalts and advances its supremacy every day to a greater height: nay, it preserves our taste, and renders our palate more exact than other men's are; for all the senses, I persuade myself, when ruled by reason, must needs be more upright judges than when that is absent and set aside. And therefore, methinks, there is nothing more preserves the honour and reverence that is due to our natures than this virtue. It maintains the majesty of our countenance, the lustre of our eyes, the graceful deportment of our whole man: whereas all the world confesses, and it is their common speech, that a man in drink is nothing else but a man disguised. He looks basely; he is the scorn of children and fools; he is pointed and laughed at, as if he were some monster; he is the sport and merriment even of those who have thus disrobed him of himself. And as for them whose brains are so strong that they have overcome him, and think it an honour to be able to hold more than the rest of their fellows; this glory is their shame. They are the vermin of the earth, who live to consume the goods of others, and to waste the patrimony of the poor. And when they brag of their victories, they are so silly as not to remember what one of the philosophers saith, that they are 'overcome by the hogshead[x],' which is far more capacious than themselves. Nay, I cannot but think those people who know no pleasure but high fare, the joy of whose life depends upon full tables and as full bellies, who love nothing like feasts, and would have them as sumptuous as sacrifices, to be a sort of creatures much inferior to some beasts, who, though they are not capable to govern themselves, yet are ruled by us, and rendered serviceable and profitable to the world: but these are good for nothing but only to devour; and commonly they follow this trade so long, that they devour themselves and all that belongs unto them.

No doubt, said the good father, (who here thought fit to interrupt him,) the praises which you bestow upon temperance

[x] ["Quum superstes toti convivio fueris, quum omnes viceris virtute magnifica, et nemo tam vini capax fuerit; vinceris a dolio."—Sen. Epist. lxxxiii.]

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are very just, and you can never commend it to excess: which procures me therefore the greater grief, when I see so few in the world who live according to the rules of this virtue. Their number is very small who are not corrupted with the love of these sensual pleasures. Though they do not fall into such high debauches as you speak of, not drinking as if they were in a perpetual fever, nor eating as if they were laying in provision for a long siege, (which methinks is a good description which I have heard some give of their excess;) yet they are not many who measure their meals by their needs; and they are not to be told who are bibbers of wine, and love to sit long at compotations, and design to *make provision for the flesh, that they may fulfil the lusts thereof*[y]. Nay, which is saddest of all, there are too many of those who profess to be religious *whose god is their belly*[z]. They love feasts, and hunt after good cheer: and, if it be but sanctified with a sermon, gourmandise is innocent in their account; like some naughty Christians in the elder times, whom I mentioned before, who thought they might carouse and drink as long as they would, so they did but sit with a mortified face upon the martyrs' tombs. And it were some comfort if their sin ended here; but their intemperance is the mother and fruitful parent of many other vices. A long train of sins, as well as diseases, waits upon this, and follows it just at the heels. It both brings in and it uncovers every other evil inclination: it removes that modesty which stands more in the way than any thing else of most men's bad endeavours: it banishes all shame, so that there is nothing left to oppose any wickedness. *Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contention? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine;* as the wise man tells us[a]. Whatsoever evil dispositions are in the mind, then they take opportunity to show themselves. Malice is brought into open view, and spits its venom: the proud spirit is laid bare, and seeks no pretence for its insolence: the furious man is left naked of all his guards, and cares not whom he mischiefs: the lustful man uncovers himself, and scarce waits for secresy to fulfil his desires. And truly I wish I could not say that this folly, which is the most filthy of all, was not the common issue

[y] [Rom. xiii. 14.] [z] [Phil. iii. 19.] [a] [Prov. xxiii. 29, 30.]

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of that of which we speak. There is more of this uncleanness in the world than you imagine. They that wear the countenance of religious people are led, I assure you, by their cups to the brothel-houses, and pass from the taverns to the stews. So it was of old, and the same villainy continues still, that many *turn the grace of God into lasciviousness*[b]. And if you would know who they are, the same apostle tells you that they were such as, feasting with others, did *feed themselves without fear*. And so St. Peter also lets us know, that *they who accounted it pleasure to riot in the day-time* (in the clear light of the gospel) *had eyes full of adultery, and could not cease from sin*[c]. But I will leave these men, who are gone in the way of the false prophet Balaam, who taught the children of Israel to commit fornication. Only let me leave those words of the apostle with them; *They are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever*[d]. Nor will I say any more of the rest of those sins which attend upon an intemperate life, which makes a man's soul like a piece of low ground, which, by reason of abundance of wet, brings forth nothing but frogs and worms and adders, all manner of wickedness, which either dishonours God, or hurts ourselves and our neighbours. I will rather turn my eyes to a more pleasant sight, and comfort them with the remembrance of those good men whom we saw just now so happily met together. And methinks it is a very great felicity, in this false world, to find but one face among so many vizors, and to be able to lay hold on something that hath truth and substance in it among so many shadows. Having found therefore a little number of seriously sober persons, it cannot but make me rejoice the more that Temperance hath some clients, and that she is not forsaken of all her followers.

But though this be very true, that we do deservedly praise this virtue, and all her servants; yet methinks you should have observed something else at that meeting, which is worthy of your commendation. Did not the very meeting itself seem a very comely sight? And was you not glad to behold so many kind neighbours assembled at that decent entertainment? To

[b] Jude 4, 12. [c] 2 Pet. ii. 13, 14. [d] Jude 17.

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me there is not a more agreeable spectacle than a company of select friends, vacant of business, and full of cheerfulness, met together at one table. And I cannot imagine that a man who understands pleasure can wish any equal to this, that he might make one in such an happy society. You may think indeed that it is sufficient to our delight if we can meet our friends any where; but I am of the mind that the pleasure is redoubled when they refresh their bodies and their minds both together. I hate indeed your great feasts; where persons that never saw one the other before, nor ever shall perhaps again, are mixed together; where there is much talk, and little or no discourse. But these love-feasts methinks do call to my mind the days of innocence, and make me wish for nothing, when I enjoy them, but only such another pleasure. Here we know that we pledge an hearty love, when a man presents his kindness to us. Our mind is entertained with a greater variety than the body enjoys; the very taste of our meat is exalted by the inward delight which we feel in our hearts. And whatsoever satisfaction we then receive, we impart as much to those that gave it. The weak and languishing appetite is excited by the sight of friends, and the pleasure of their discourse: and the discourse flows more freely by the moderate satisfaction of our appetite. Our dull spirits are raised by communication with our friends: and that communication grows more lively by the exaltation of our spirits. Or if you please so to consider it; friends never talk with greater wit and more freedom, than when they take an innocent repast together; and their meat never doth their bodies more good, than when this sweet conversation is the sauce for it.

Indeed, said the pilgrim, I had forgot to reflect upon that part of those good men's satisfaction: which I take to be so great, and yet so harmless withal, that I shall ever be a friend of such pleasures, and permit myself to be merry in such worthy company. They have convinced me that I ought not to affect a sad brow, and an heavy countenance. They have reconciled me to smiles and mirth: and provided they will keep within such bounds, I will never quarrel with my passions any more. But there is none that I have a greater kindness for than that of love: the pleasures of which, as itself acquaints me withal,

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so the usefulness of it those excellent men have also taught me.

And, not to part so soon from so good a meeting, I must let you know that they understood afterward a great part of the discourse at that table was about friendship, and the happiness of him that had found a faithful friend. Which when it was repeated to him by one that was there, it was a great means of confirming this affection in our pilgrim, and making him rejoice in his advantageous choice. My memory is not so good as to carry away all that I heard was said on this argument, but it begun with a commendation of that saying of the son of Sirach: *A faithful friend is a strong defence: and he that hath found such an one hath found a treasure. Nothing doth countervail a faithful friend, and his excellency is unvaluable. A faithful friend is the medicine of life, and they that fear the Lord shall find him*[o]. He speaks like an oracle, said one of the company, for a friend methinks is the only universal medicine against all the evils of this present life. And with your permission I will make a comment upon this aphorism; or rather I will recite you the words of a good author[p], who, though I believe he never saw him, hath glossed methinks most excellently on the text of that wise Hebrew. To which when they had all most willingly accorded, he thus proceeded:

"There is no remedy in the world," saith he, "equal to that of a friend; for other medicines are profitable to the sick, and superfluous to those who are in health; but he is necessary to both. He supplies the wants of poverty. He adds a brightness to our glory; and he obscures and hides our ignominy. This one thing lessens the difficulty of those that are troublesome to us; and increases the happiness which all our enjoyments bring us. It makes evil things little, and good things great. By this sweet society our griefs are divided, and all our joys are doubled. What calamity is not intolerable without a friend? And what felicity is not ungrateful if we have none to share with us in it? We suffer not so much when we have some to condole and suffer with us: and we rejoice the more when our felicity gives a pleasure not only to our-

[o] Ecclus. vi. 14, 15. 16. [p] Dion. Prus. 1. [Orat. iii. p. 133 sq.]

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selves, but to others also. If solitude and want of company be so horrid, so dreadful a thing; it is not to be understood of the want of men, but of the want of friends. For it is a good solitude, not to dwell with those that do not love us: and a man would choose such an hermitage where he might not be troubled with them who bear no benevolous affection to him. But for my part, I cannot think it to be an happiness which hath no friend to participate in its pleasures. A man may more easily bear the hardest calamity with his friend, than the greatest felicity alone. So that 'I judge him the most miserable who in his calamity hath many to insult over him; and in his felicity none to taste of his joys, and rejoice with him [q].' Who is there more speedy in his succours than a friend? Whose praise is sweeter to us than his? And by whom is truth spoken with less grief than by such a mouth? What castle, what bulwark, what arms and weapons, are more potent to secure us, than the custody of those who are well-affected to us? For in truth, so many friends as a man hath gained, with so many eyes doth he see, and with so many ears doth he hear, and with so many understandings doth he think of that which is profitable for him. It is all one as if God had given to a man in one body a great many souls; every one of which do tenderly consult and care for his good. Nay, if our eyes, and our tongue, and our hands are much to be prized, not only for the delights of life, but that we may live; friends are not only as profitable, but more necessary than these. For your eyes can scarce see those things which are under your feet; but by our friends we may see those things which are in the furthermost parts of the earth. By our ears we hear only the things that are very near us; but by our friends we hear them which are most remote. The tongue signifies only to those who are present, and with the hands the strongest man can do more than two or three are able: but by friends we may talk with all, and be able to effect innumerable things; for they will be sure to speak and do for us all that which is conducible to our good. But that which is most incredible is, that when a man hath friends, he may do many things at the same time, and consult about divers

[q] [Ὡς ἐκεῖνον ἀθλιώτατον ἐγὼ κρίνω δικαίως ὃς ἐν μὲν ταῖς συμφοραῖς πλείστους ἔχει τοὺς ἐφηδομένους, ἐν δὲ ταῖς εὐτυχίαις οὐδένα τὸν συνηδόμενον. Ibid.]

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affairs at once; and see and hear, nay, more than that, he may be in many places at the same moment. His pleasures are multiplied as he multiplies his friends; for all that delights them touches him with a sense of joy as much as what concerns himself. If he give any thing to them, it rejoices him as much as if he had gained a great deal of wealth. If he receive any thing, it rejoices him too, because his friends are pleased. Though he be very fond of his kindred, yet he thinks friendship a greater good than consanguinity; for without any kindred between men, this is a strict and profitable relation; but without this there is no comfort at all in the greatest nearness of blood."

And therefore we may well conclude with our wise man, that this is the greatest treasure, the strongest defence, and invaluable jewel, the very balsam and comfort, and only preserver of our life. A man is scarce himself till he have found a friend, or at least he is but half a man. For as another wise man saith, Nuptial love produces men, but it is friendly love which gives them perfection. It may well be called the salt and seasoning of our pilgrimage. Without this, life itself would be unsavoury, and all the pleasures of it insipid. It is the most agreeable pleasure that a person of virtue can enjoy. It is an holy, chaste and innocent pleasure: a voluptuousness which riseth higher than sense, and seeks the superior part. It acts on the mind without causing it to suffer a change. It moves it with so much sweetness that it stirs not out of its seat. Or it ravishes it from itself, only to remove it to a better place.

When he had done, they all agreed he did illustrate his author as much as he had done the son of Sirach. For, said they, we have read now this writer by the benefit of your eyes; and you have so happily transported us out of ourselves, that we find indeed we are better than where we were before. But yet, added another, that wise man you spoke of gives us this advice in the same place: "If thou wouldst get a friend, prove him first, and be not hasty to credit him. For one man is a friend for his own occasion, and will not abide in the day of trouble. Some friends will be thy companions at thy table, but in the time of affliction they will not continue. In thy prosperity they will be as thyself, and will be bold over thy ser-

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vants. But if thou be brought low, they will be against thee, or hide themselves from thee. Separate thyself from thine enemies, and take heed of thy friends." How therefore shall we know the faithful friend whom he so much praises? or by what marks shall we distinguish him from these pretenders? I would be loath to stay till the day of trouble before I know these counterfeit lovers, and would be glad to impart my joys to one that deserves them. It is a very necessary question, said a third, and therefore with your consent I will undertake his character, or at least his description. You shall not only have our leave, saith a fourth in the name of the rest, but our thanks; which we give you beforehand for so good an offer. The world is full of false-hearted friends. Towns and kingdoms are made up of these honest kind of cheats, as one whom you know is wont to call them. Into whatsoever place you come, you will find very little of that which you have brought hither: I mean affection without interest; fidelity without stain; with all the goodness and freedom of the age of innocence. There are many, saith he, that had rather lose an hundred friends than so many crowns. They value them no more than they do men in Turkey that are to be sold. And I know some that would easily forego their most dear and faithful intimates at the rate of ten or twenty pound apiece. Men they are (if we honour them not too much with that name) who, as the wise man you spoke of suggests to us, come but to drink, and return back again when the bottles are empty. And therefore it will oblige us very much if you will be at the pains to let us know the qualities of a man that is fit to be admitted into our society.

"A friend, then," replied he, "that is worthy of our bosom love, is a person that is equally good and intelligent; that can neither deceive, nor easily be deceived; that can seldom do ill out of weakness, and never out of design. He is one that will serve you without vanity, but with all imaginable zeal; without any interest, but with the exactest care and diligence. That will engage himself most passionately in your defence when you are absent, or unfortunate, or dead. That will follow you with his love to the other world, and serve those when you are dead whom you would have served if you had been

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alive. He is one that never conceals his own secret from you, nor reveals yours to others. That will freely reprove you, and never backbite other men. That can see your faults, and yet easily pardon them; and that as readily acknowledges merit, as he espies and pardons faults. That cannot tell how to do any thing without your knowledge, unless it be a good turn. That would have you see all he doth, except the friendly offices which he is every where rendering to you. That loves to entertain you with pleasant discourse, but howsoever with wholesome and profitable. That will follow you to all dangers, though to no sins. That can vary perhaps with your humour, but not with your fortune. That can make you a feast where there is no good cheer besides himself. That can serve as sauce to excite your appetite, and save you the charge of wine to exhilarate your spirits. That will divert you, without the prejudice or offence of any body else. That will make you more sensible of his tenderness by small things than others can do by greater services.

"He is one that thinks all the praises of others importune if you complain. To whom even his own merit seems odious, if it receive not your approbation. One that loves no pleasure so much as complacence to you. To whom all places are alike, so you be not absent. He can deny himself any thing, and his friend nothing. He can bear himself company in solitude, but is never weary of the company of those he loves. He hath a sense of honour equal to his sense of love. He hath no vulgar thoughts, but yet stoops to the most vulgar actions for the service of his friend. He hath a great and generous mind, but omits not the trifles which will please him. He will neglect his own business to do his. He will receive a kindness as well as do it; and is not more willing to oblige than to be obliged. He is thankful and acknowledging for the smallest offices of love; and studies to repay it with the greatest. He is possessed of all the virtues, but makes a show of none. He loves decency without affectation, generosity without pride, courtesy without ceremony, and strictness without severity. His morality is void of all rudeness; his seriousness gives no disgust; his silence is without sullenness; and his humility without baseness and meanness of spirit. He hath a world of good qualities, and

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modesty is superior to them all; for he is shamefaced without ignorance, and blushes because you see he knows so much. He delights not to praise that in others wherein he excels himself: nor is he sparing there of his commendations, where his own defects will leave him no title to the application. He can hide any thing better than his love. He can do any thing better than deny your requests. He can endure any thing with more ease than to be separated from your society. When you are with him, you are still alone. When you advise with him, it is with yourself. He hath all things in common with you, but chiefly adversity. He and his friend have but one will, though they may have different understandings. And indeed this one quality is it which I like in a friend above all the rest, viz., a sweet and innocent compliance, which is the cement of love, and the secret charm of society. This rare disposition makes him to please us without flattery, and to tie himself to us without the loss of liberty. It accords to our desires without opposing reason: gives way to our weakness without increasing and cherishing of it: accommodates itself to our humour under the generous profession of freedom: serves us in all things it can, without being captivated to any. There is nothing baser, indeed, than compliance, when it is separated from other virtues: nothing more offensive to those on whom it is bestowed, if they have any noble resentments in them, than when it is so servile as to subject the understanding and enthral the reason to their desires. But being to attend upon those other good qualities which I have required in my friend, and serving always with a liberty of mind; as there is nothing less offends any body else, so nothing more sweetens a man's own disposition, or more delights and gratifies that of his friends. It bends itself to profit others, and not only to please. It studies to advantage them with the greatest civility. It subdues their passions with the greatest quietness. It reduces them to themselves without violence. It stoops unto them, that it may lift them up. It condescends, that they may be recovered. It fashions itself to what they are, that they may be what they ought. It yields to their anger, that it may disarm them of it. It grants their desires, that it may take them away. It makes a man agree to others, not that they may comply with him again, but comply with reason.

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"In short, therefore, he must be a virtuous person, we all grant, whom we choose for our friend. For he is not capable to be a friend to us, who is not a friend to himself. He can never accord well with another who feels an intestine war continually in his own breast. But yet all virtuous persons do not so resemble each the other as to join together in that strict union which bears the name of friendship; and therefore he is fit to be received into this relation, who, besides the qualities common to all good men, doth symbolize with us in his humours and inclinations. When you meet with such a man as answers this description, make much of him, and place a great confidence in him. To distrust him, is the highest sin you can commit against him. To be suspicious of the truth of what he saith, is the most notorious breach of the bond of your friendship. And as soon as ever you begin to doubt, it is certain you begin less to love."

To this effect was the discourse of him who took upon him to give the description of a worthy friend: which was highly applauded by the whole table, and served for an excellent close of their feast. And truly the repetition of it made a new feast for our pilgrim, who began upon this occasion to reflect on his own happiness, who had met with a friend that answered in all points this great character to the very life. O sir, said he to the father, what a loss am I at for words to express my felicity, who have found the best of men and the best of friends! How gladly would they have admitted you into that loving society from which we lately parted! They would have ravished you from me, and stayed you there for ever, if they had known your worth. They would have thought it too much that I should enclose so great a good, which is capable to serve a little world. For, besides the rest of those virtuous qualities which they remembered, you are the most compassionate of all men living. You cannot be merry, I see, if I be sad. The least grief which I suffer penetrates to the bottom of your heart. And, if I mistake not, I touch upon a truth of the greatest remark to distinguish a slight from a substantial friend; for I have heard wiser men than myself note, that the world hath no great number of those people who are deeply wounded with the sense of the misery that befalls their friends, or whose re-

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sentments of sorrow are of any long durance, though they be never so passionately moved with the first sight or report of them. Compassionate grief, they observe, is wont soon to slide away, and make room for the entrance of any pleasure. Most men can divert themselves delightfully if occasion serve, though their friends' sufferings be never so bad. They have not made their concernments so much their own as that they should feel pain as long as their friends. But yet I find you to be one of that little number who are infinitely tender, and thoroughly touched with all the infirmities of those that they love. How often have you charged yourself with my cares and disquiets! How many thorns have you drawn out of my mind! How many expedients have you devised to succour and support me under all my burdens! You have often tempered the heat of my passions. You have sweetened the sharpness of my spirit. You have healed my wounds when you could not prevent the blow. You have brought me cordials when I was capable of no consolations but those which your company administered to me. You have divided with me the labours which I am to undergo, and taken a part of that duty upon you which I am to perform; and have made yourself so inseparable to me, as if it was but one life which you and I lived. I ought to value you as much as myself; and forasmuch as my person is dearer to me than all my worldly goods, I ought to esteem the benefits you have done my mind more than if you had given me a mass of treasure, and possessed me of the fairest estate which the eye of the world hath ever seen.

CHAP. XXXIII.

How they chanced to see a very poor man entertaining himself with much pleasure under a tree. Whence arose a discourse of contentment: and the means to attain it. Of humility and charity. That notwithstanding all our charity, we must not think to have the world so good as we would wish it.

I KNOW not to what length he meant to continue these acknowledgments, if a new accident had not put an end to his speech. For as he was going to extol the nobleness of his disposition, as well as the tenderness which he observed, and had

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just uttered these words, You scarce know how to keep a measure when there is occasion to be kind; your favours seem defective unless they exceed: they were on a sudden encountered with another delightful spectacle, which quite diverted his thoughts from what he was about to say. For as they passed by a fair field, they espied a poor man in very ragged clothes under a large beech tree, who was listening to the music which the birds made in the neighbouring grove, and sometimes whistled himself to bear them company in their melodies. A long time they saw him thus entertain himself, and at last he pulled out a piece of bread and cheese, which, with eyes lifted up to heaven, he seemed to acknowledge a liberal dinner. And, at the end of it, he went and pledged the birds in a little stream that ran by him, giving God thanks again that had provided food for all his creatures. They were much taken with the innocence of his looks, and the contentment which they thought they read in his face, which bred a great desire in them to know him better, and see something more of a virtue hid under rags. And so approaching nearer to him, and giving him the ordinary salutations which the time of the day required, they entered into discourse, and in conclusion, inquired of his condition, and how he came to lead so merry a life, being in appearance so destitute and low in his worldly fortunes. The poor man made no scruple to discover his heart to them; but, being of a free and open disposition, and not caring who was privy to his thoughts, most readily accorded to answer their desires. And he plainly told them, that the occasion of the present satisfaction, which perhaps they saw him express, was to hear the birds so merry; who neither sow, nor reap, nor have any barns wherein to lay up their food. I could not choose, said he, but bear a part with them in their mirth, and think myself at least as rich and happy as those silly creatures. The world, I see, is as full for me as it is for them. All places are crowded with the blessings of God, and I know not where he should bestow more, they are so very full. A few of them also will serve my turn, for my wants are but a few. And a few things, sure, are easily obtained, and cannot be long in getting. We need not go far to seek enough, for there is no scarcity of a little, and a little will suffice. And, thanks be to God, I was never yet at any great trouble to

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procure this little number of necessary things. At present my wants are all supplied; and I have no reason to doubt but they will be so for the time to come. For, sure, there is a God; and he must needs take care of his creatures: and, I imagine, it is no pride (which will not become me in this poverty) to think myself one of the better sort; and therefore conclude that I shall not want. There is nothing so much comforts me as the thoughts of his fulness, of his wisdom, of his goodness, power, and presence to all places. Which make me confident that at present I enjoy what is most convenient for me, and that I shall never fail to do the like through all my life. And if I doubted of any of these, that instance of his love and care in sending his own Son into the world would rid me of all my scruples. *For if he spared not his Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him give us all things*[a]? For the comforts of this belief I continually render my thanks to God; and you cannot conceive any greater contentment than that which I find in admiring and praising his eternal goodness. Nay, I can never, methinks, give him thanks enough for letting me enjoy the use of my eyes, my tongue, my hands and feet; for these are greater things than all that I want, and by these and his blessing I may make provision for my wants. There are many, I see, in the world are poorer by half than myself. I possess so much more than they, as all those things which I have now numbered. O how rich do I esteem myself in compare with the blind, and the dumb, and the lame! But I should be much ashamed, if, among all those who have less than I, there should be found men that have more contentment. And I consider with myself sometimes, should these poor souls murmur, what is it that I should say to give them content? and that very thing I say to myself. I make the experiment first upon my own mind, and if it can do nothing there to comfort me who am in better condition, I think it unreasonable to propound it unto them. And sometimes, on the other side, I cast mine eyes on them that have more, and see that they are as far from content as those who have nothing at all: from whence I conclude that it is not to be found in all the world, but in ourselves, and there I may find it without the abundance that they enjoy. I perceive also that poverty is not without

[a] [Rom. viii. 32.]

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its benefits, and that it is deservedly called the mother of sobriety, the nurse of arts, the mistress of wisdom, the spur to industry, and the school to which we are put to learn the knowledge of ourselves, and the dependence we have on an higher Cause. Beside all which, I use to call it my sanctuary, which nobody will presume to rifle. Here I am safe, for all men hate to hurt the poor. There is no antidote of greater virtue, as I have heard men say, against poison, than this condition wherein I am. They are the vessels of gold, and not of earth and wood, wherein such deadly potions are wont to be mingled. Nay, this music which you saw me listening to, this music of God's own creating, gives me the greater ravishment, because I consider that none can rob me of it and leave me my liberty and life. They that have taken away my goods, and have banished me into the woods, cannot hinder the earth from putting forth the flowers, nor the trees from yielding their fruit, nor the birds from singing among the branches; no, nor me from entertaining myself with all these pleasures, at least from being contented. And truly, I ought, methinks, to rejoice that these satisfactions are remaining, rather than repine that those are gone which could never have given me full satisfaction. But, I suppose, I speak to those who are not unacquainted with some wants, and therefore I may forbear to say any more than this; that if you can tell what it is that keeps you from being miserable, that very thing is the comfort of my poverty. For he that can rest contented in one condition can satisfy himself in all: and he who is not pleased in his present state will always find some matter of complaint.

Our young pilgrim would fain have had him to proceed in declaring the sense of his soul to them, because he took him to be so happy. But yet he could not choose but yield to the equity of that which he had now said; and therefore, after they had requited the poor man's generous freedom with a long discourse, which both testified their sympathy with him, and added much to the contentment of his mind, he entered into a debate with the father when they were alone, about those things which will prepare the soul to receive satisfaction in the meanest condition into which they might fall. For my part, said he, I cannot but look back upon the felicity of those who

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lead a temperate life in the midst of all the abundance of this world. Every thing lets me see the necessity and excellency of that virtue, and gives me occasion to renew my commendations of it. The moderate use of all pleasant things doth most effectually teach contentment, because it shows us how little will serve our turn. It weans us also from the love of sensual delights, which is the only thing that makes the want or the loss of them so troublesome unto us. It makes room for wise and sober thoughts: and, methinks, is nothing else but a constant exercise of contentment in one particular, which must needs dispose our minds to the practice of all other parts of it. It is no great matter to be debarred of that which we have oft forbidden to ourselves: there is nothing taken away but what we could spare: we want nothing but what we could want while we were possessed of it. We are not forced to be without these things, for we chose before to enjoy but a little of them. This is to preoccupate and forestall the blows of fortune, as the heathens, I have heard, were wont to say when they spoke of the changes that we suffer in the world. We are beforehand by this means with any alteration. Nothing can give us any wound that shall make us smart, because we have felt the point of it already. We have made a trial of its power, and know what want can do upon us. We may cry out, as a generous soul once did, 'I have got before thee, whatsoever necessity thou art that intendest to come upon me. I have taken thee, and hold thee fast in my hands. I have intercepted all thy assaults, and thou canst not touch my heart[b].' Nothing can arrive but what is here before. I know the worst of all things, for I have inured myself to bear them.

You are in the right, replied the father, and I thank you for this good reflection. They do very ill, sure, who desire to lead a contented life, and yet use themselves to fare deliciously every day. They forget what is a coming who love to swim in pleasures, and to gulp down as much as they are able of these sensual delights. They are but preparing their own prisons, and twisting the whips that must scourge themselves. They do but make themselves more tender, and apt to shrink at the

[b] [The maxim is that of Metrodorus, "Occupavi te, Fortuna, atque cepi, omnesque aditus tuos interclusi," &c.]

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prick of a pin. They will cry out most bitterly under those lashes which sober men will scarce feel. And yet, let me tell you, that you would have done well to have cast your eyes a little further back to some things of which we have not so lately spoken. You carry your contentment about you continually, and it lies in a little room, if you have not forgot the very first lesson which I taught you at your setting out. These few words, I AM NOUGHT, I HAVE NOUGHT, I DESIRE NOUGHT BUT JESUS AND JERUSALEM, I told you were like a little bottle of essences, which a traveller must always have in his pocket; and of which, if he do but take a sip, he will instantly find relief in any condition of life. Humility and Charity, I mean, are sufficient to carry us through this evil world with an equal and well-poised mind: for, as for the first of them, what is it but the submission of our wills entirely to God, which is the very secret of contentment? It is a greater sense of his supreme authority over us, with which it is a folly to dispute; and of his supreme wisdom and goodness, out of whose hands it is a folly, if we might, to take ourselves. It makes us think that we deserve nothing at all, and so to be well pleased that we have not less than we enjoy. It teaches us to renounce our own understandings, and to think that best which is so in God's account. But I will not take a great deal of pains in an easy argument; and therefore let us only consider what the matter is, that no man is satisfied with the portion which Providence hath allotted to him. From the greatest to the meanest we see that men are ever complaining of their fortune. It is in vain that Heaven bestows many blessings upon them, for they turn all into gall and bitterness, and have something within which destroys all their happiness. The taste of what they have is spoiled, by a perpetual thirst after something or other which they want. But might they not enjoy themselves well enough without it? There is no question to be made of it. For otherwise he that hath given them greater things, would not permit them to be without the less. *The life is more than meat, and the body than raiment*[b]. What is the reason then that they desire that so passionately of which they have no real need, and never take any comfort in that which they cannot be without? Truly, I can find none, save

[b] [Matt. vi. 25. Luke xii. 23.]

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only this, that though they do not need many things to their happiness, yet in the opinion of the world they do, and it will not account them happy without them. The world thinks him nobody who does not wear fine clothes, who hath not a great estate, who is not able to leave his children very rich, who cannot revenge himself on his enemies, and have a large command over others, though he can command himself never so much; and so they sacrifice their own ease to the popular opinions. They vainly employ their time to satisfy other men rather than themselves. They consider more what will be said of them, if they be not in such or such an estate, than they do their own quiet and repose. And is it possible, can we think, that a man should be well pleased, who, refusing to comply with reason alone, desires to give content to that famous chimæra called *opinion?* It cannot be; especially since it is the opinion of others, and not his own only, which he follows; and this is a thing so infinite, and withal so mutable and uncertain, that it will never give him any rest who is led by it. But then, after all this, let us consider what it is that makes men desirous to content the world in order to content themselves. Is it not their pride and desire to be esteemed? Is it not a vain study to be admired and to have a great name in the world? Let us be humble then, and we shall be contented: let us have a mean esteem of ourselves, and we shall not be troubled that other men's thoughts are conformable to our own: let us think we have more than we deserve, and we shall at the most but study to be worthy still to have it: let us thus endeavour to make ourselves happy, and we shall not care whether other men think us happy or no.

And then for Charity, or the love of God, it hath this particular charm, that it renders all conditions alike agreeable unto us, because we never consider any thing therein, but only him alone. When we are so full of him as to love him with all our heart, and all our soul, and all our strength, there can be but little room for any thing else. Some troublesome thoughts may intrude themselves, but they cannot dwell in us, because the love of him will thrust them out. Besides, the love of him is very powerful to beget in our souls a persuasion that he loveth us. Our love is but the product of his, and there is

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nothing more comfortable than to think that we are beloved of so great a good. And then again, love is apt to make us well pleased with all that they do whom we entirely love. We can take nothing ill at their hands, but always persuade ourselves that they mean well. It pleases us much that they should please themselves. And therefore if we love God, it will produce the same satisfaction in all his providences: we shall love them every one, because we are in love with him. Especially since we are satisfied by this love of his good affection to us, it will not let us suspect him of any unkindness. We shall always rest assured of his good will, and so have no more to say but only this, *Thy will, O Love, be done.* And I may add also, that the love of God being just opposite to our self-love, which is the root of all our troubles, must needs be the foundation and root of all our contentment. For what is contentment, but the stability, as it were, of the soul, whereby it stands in one unmovable temper? It is a kind of indifferency, an unconcernedness in all things but only God. And how is that to be purchased, but only by such a strong affection to him as destroys the inordinate love of ourselves, and all other things? As long as that love of ourselves reigns, it carries us headlong to every thing that pleases our carnal appetites. It makes us range up and down the world after every trifle that we have a fancy unto. It makes us vex if we be crossed in the least of our desires. It sets us in a restless motion without any possibility of ever fixing ourselves. It makes us as passionately concern ourselves for a toy, as if it touched our very life. And therefore till this be destroyed, we are not likely to find the contentment which we seek. Now the love of God, that is just contrary to it, and cannot stand together with it. That concentres and unites all our thoughts and affections in one good, which we may always have, and in which we may always have satisfaction. That settles our souls in one place, out of which we need not stir to seek our happiness. That carries our hearts continually above, and sets us out of the reach of these worldly things. It raises us beyond ourselves, and makes us feel him who is infinitely better: who also, we know, rules and disposes all things in the world, according to that excellent goodness which we feel in him. Let us love him therefore now as much as we can, and in this let us place our happiness.

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So shall we never fail to be well pleased; because every thing will make us more to love him.

I thank you most heartily, said the pilgrim, for the seasonable remembrance you have given me of that excellent lesson. It hath done me so much good, that I cannot see how any thing should trouble me, unless it be this; to see so little love of God in the world, and that I can do no more good upon men whom I love for God's sake. It is very well, replied the father, if you have no more to trouble you than this; for it is only the fruit of a great love, which sometime is wont to make us sick, if it meet with unkind entertainment in those on whom it is bestowed. And besides, let me tell you this for your better satisfaction, that you must content yourself to see the world so imperfect as it is. You will never have any quiet, if you vex yourself because you cannot bring mankind to that exact idea of things which you have formed in your mind. You desire, I perceive, above all things, that there might be peace on earth, and that Christian people might live in a sweet agreement together. But be not ignorant, I pray you, of this; that you do but trouble yourself, and the world too, if you think to attain this happiness by making all so perfect as yourself. As it is too commonly seen, that good men hinder peace by insisting over vehemently upon lesser truths, which might well stand aside to make way for unity in greater things: so an unseasonable and violent endeavour to correct some faults, and root out some abuses, and to take away some imperfect institutions, hath too frequently driven peace away from the church of God. All which proceeds from want of prudence and discreet consideration of things, with which an honest and well-meaning zeal had need to be tempered. We must well weigh the nature and moment of things. When it is impossible to have all we honestly desire, we must take what we can, rather than want the chiefest thing that is in our desires. We do not live in a world that is composed of complete Christians. All is weak, all is sick and distempered in the societies of men. They are in a state of great infirmity, not to say corruption and degeneracy. He that would go about presently to make all so healthy and pure, so free from all disorder as he desires, hath much piety perhaps, but little prudence. He considers not that a crazy

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state of things cannot be so soon amended, and restored to entire soundness. We shall sooner kill than work a cure, if we apply such violent medicines, and suddenly make use of the highest remedies. We must deal gently with patients that are very sick, and also labour of a chronic disease. We must wait for favourable seasons; we must try what they can bear; we must go on by steps and degrees to extirpate a long settled and inveterate ill habit of mind. In plain words, we must not expect and stay, as I told you, for peace in ourselves, or the world either, till all men be as good as we would have them. We must not remain in confusion till we can establish such an exact platform and model of things as piety teaches us to design. We must consider whether it can be attained in this state of affairs. We must observe what the condition of the world is able to endure. We must do as workmen and artificers are wont, who, when they have not the choice of their materials out of which they are to frame a piece, do content themselves to form such an one as their stuff will yield. It is impossible out of bad matter to form a complete and excellent piece of work. And this doth not argue the defect of the artificer, but the incapacity of that upon which he exercises his skill. It is the knotty log, and not he, which renders the statue so mean. Such defects and imperfections in the body of mankind, nay, and of Christians also, we must be forced to accommodate ourselves unto, or else we must break society, and not be one body. Neither God nor man will expect that we should make things perfect, where the state of men is capable of nothing but imperfection. He himself was fain to comply with the obstinate hardness of the carnal Jews. The laws which he gave were not the best, but such as they could bear. And truly we must all be content to suffer that which we cannot mend. Patience must be the remedy of those things which cannot be corrected: provided that Christianity be not destroyed, nor justice and piety subverted, we must, for peace sake, tolerate many faults, till they can be taken away, and leave it still remaining. There are some things that are absolutely necessary, and others only excellent and very desirable: some that are indispensable, and others that may be let alone: some that must exercise our zeal, and others only our patience. And we had need pray to God that all may be so happy as rightly to distinguish these.

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That they may have as much light as they have heat. That good affection may not be separated from good understanding. That the more piety any man hath, the more prudence and wisdom he may be adorned withal. So will he not only keep peace, but also make it. He will not be a friend, but also a father of it: and in all likelihood obtain that by soft and moderate courses, which the more violent, though seemingly more pious too, will certainly drive away.

It is possible, indeed, the world may call this a lukewarm temper; but do not regard at all what they say: for as charity teaches you to be thus moderate, so from humility you learn not to matter their censures of you for it. You shall never be at any quiet if you be troubled at all that men are pleased to talk of your doings; or if their good esteem be necessary to your content, it is a very easy matter to foretell that you shall always live without it. Those are excellent sayings, methinks, which our forefathers have left behind them: "He shall have enough to do who studies to please fools, and them that have no skill." "To please and to displease are the mere effects of chance and hazard; wisdom and sufficiency have no share therein." "Two things deserve to have but little credit given to them; the esteem of great men, and the testimony of the people." "Reputation is a thing that is often got without merit, and lost without any ill deservings." And therefore when we have won the greatest share of men's good opinion, why should we think ourselves the better? and when we have lost it again, what cause is there to judge ourselves the worse? Are you the taller in the evening because your shadow is longer, or are you shorter at noon because it is then contracted? Do not think of yourself then according to the measure of the honour you receive from others; for it is at the best but the shadow of virtue. So you know it is vulgarly called; and if you allow the expression, there is more of instruction in it than you may imagine. The shadow, you know, attends the body wheresoever it goes; it is its inseparable companion, and will not be parted from it. And so truly doth honour and glory wait upon all virtuous actions. Though nobody commend them, yet they commend themselves. A man cannot but think he hath done bravely, though there be none to applaud him but his own

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conscience of what he hath done. And therefore regard not so much what the world thinks of you as what you think of yourself. Ask not whether it be satisfied, but whether you have rendered justice to your own resolutions. Wait not to receive commendations from abroad, but think it sufficient if you meet with no reproaches at home. Not that I would have you refuse just praises when they are bestowed upon you, much less think it is the style of saints to be talking of your vileness: but I would only have you to 'do well, though you hear ill[c];' and only to learn to do better if you meet with good acceptance. For the truth is, the approbation of wise men, though it should not puff us up, yet it ought to encourage us: and he that rejects all the testimony of others doth not so much express the vile opinion he hath of himself, as the contempt wherein he holds his neighbours.

CHAP. XXXIV.

How they fell into the company of two travellers; one of which would have pulled out the pilgrim's eyes, and the other pulled away his guide.

These words were scarce cold upon his lips, when suddenly they heard the noise of an horse's heels behind them: which causing them to turn their eyes back, a proper man, well mounted, presented himself to them, issuing out of another road upon the left hand, and falling then into that wherein they were. When he was come up, and had joined himself to them, he asked presently the common question, Whither travel you? They were not shy of making him a true answer, but told him that they were going to a place called Jerusalem. You are well overtaken then, replied he, for that is the design of my journey also, and I shall be very glad of your company. But I must tell you, that if you have still held this road, you are very much out of your way, or else all my knowledge fails

[c] [The classical reader will recognise in this passage the peculiar idiom, common to the Greek and Latin languages, of the verb 'to hear' = 'to be spoken of,' 'to be called:' e. g. in the proverbial saying, Βασιλικὸν ἐστὶν εὖ ποιοῦντα κακῶς ἀκούειν· — Plutarch. Apophthegm. Alex. M. p. 181 F; Dio Chrysost. Orat. xlvii. fin. tom. ii. p. 235. There may even have existed a conscious parallelism in the writer's mind with the familiar line of Horace, "Tu recte vivis, si curas esse quod audis,"—lib. i. Epist. xvi. 17.]

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me: for it lies a great deal more on this hand (pointing to the left); and here we must now turn again, and leave this wherein I find you, unless we mean to miss of our aim, and be led to some other place. Let me be your guide, if you please; for I am so well acquainted with the way, that it is impossible for me to mistake it. You may trust me; for I am confident, though I should shut mine eyes, or go hoodwinked thither, I should not mislead you.

He spoke very gracefully, and was witty in his conceits; excellent company also, by reason of his pleasant humour; and withal, of a carriage very civil and inviting. But they observed that he had a sword by his side, and a pair of pistols before him, together with another instrument hanging at his belt, which was formed for pulling out of eyes. This they thought was none of a pilgrim's habit; and they viewed him so carefully, that they concluded he was one of that brood, who, if they cannot persuade travellers into their way, will drive them into it, and then carry them blindfold for fear they should forsake it. Whereupon the father said to him, Sir, do not think me rude if I be so plain with you as to speak in the style of our usual proverb, and let you know that we had rather have your room than your company. We are strongly possessed against those who would make us believe we cannot see our way unless we let them pull out our eyes. Nor will you ever be able to invent so many good words as to reconcile us to them, who, when they find men in courses contrary to their own, are not content to labour by reason to bring them to their bent, but shoot them to death if they stiffly refuse, as if they were but rogues and thieves. And you will have a great deal to do to persuade us that you are not one of that number. We see what weapons you are provided of, and we shall never be convinced that they are innocent. We dread you more than the banditti, and all the lawless men in the world. We had rather fall into the hands of Turks and barbarians than live under your tyranny; for though they strip us of our clothes and spoil our goods, yet they will leave us our senses and our reasons, of which you intend to bereave us. We may believe our eyes, and trust our feeling and our taste in their country: but in yours they have lost their credit, and are deprived of their use in matters of the greatest concernment. And there-

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fore I wonder you are so confident of the way wherein you would guide us, since your eyes do not always report things truly to you. You shall not see for us, since you acknowledge your sight so deficient. We can be sure of nothing, if such as you be our informers. Perhaps there is no such porson as Jesus, whom we seek, or he is asleep in his grave, and we shall never see him at Jerusalem. For though there are that have told us they saw him and handled him after he rose again, by what means will you assure us that it was not an illusion? Our hands and eyes may deceive us, you say, in other cases; and therefore what privilege had theirs from being cheated? But besides, as I was going to say at the first, if you are so certain of your way as you pretend, I beseech you, why do you not make it good by better arguments than those that are made of steel? Why cannot you illuminate us without casting us into the midst of a fire? Who more likely to be wrong than they who are confident they are in the right, and cannot prove it? It is a great sign you intend to cozen us, because you will not let us examine your ware. Since you vend it in a dark shop, where nobody can see it, we hold it in great suspicion of being naught. But if we do not like it, why will you not suffer us to let it alone? Why must we be forced to buy, or else pay for our refusal with the price of our lives? Is this the way to make Christians, never to consider that they are men? Is this the mark of being filled with the Holy Ghost, to breathe forth nothing but threatenings and slaughters? Methinks you transform the heavenly dove into the shape of a vulture or a raven. We have heard of her sweet nature, of her sighs and mournings; but we are strangers to her fierceness, and know nothing of her croaking for a prey. To give her claws, and arm her with talons and a bloody beak, what is it but to turn her into a monster? I cannot conceive, saith one of your own neighbours, but more ingenuous[d] than the rest, that they should be the Christian pastors who become butchers of the flock; and that the church, which was for so many ages in great persecution, should now itself begin to persecute. Or if you reckon us for those creatures that are without the fold, then we are sure to be worried by you. Though the church be never so loving a mother to you, yet she hath no kindness at all for strangers. You tell us, indeed, that she opens her arms to us,

[d] ['ingenious' in all the editions.]

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but we doubt that it is to press us to death. Nay, her breasts, we see, do feed you with blood, and not with milk. Her children are cruel and ravenous; and therefore what would you have us to judge of herself?

The gentleman, who seemed all the time to be much troubled at this discourse, here interrupted it, and told him that he was too vehement, protesting that he had no design to do them any hurt. We are as innocent people, continued he, as any in all the world; and if you would let us travel together, I would bring you to more good company, who shall give you all the assurance imaginable of our harmless intentions. Do but tell what security you desire, and I will undertake it shall not be refused. . I know them all so well, that I dare engage my soul for their fidelity to their word. Undertake nothing, I beseech you, replied the father, for other folks. If you had engaged that pawn only for yourself, it might be taken, because you seem a gentleman, and a person of good nature: but as for the most of your company, they can never give me the assurance which I shall desire. There is but one security which I can confide in, and that is the same which the Lacedæmonian demanded of one who offered to seal him his faithful friendship, viz. that if they have any will to do us any mischief, they shall never have any power. There is none but this that is worth a rush: the rest are all so vain[e] and infirm, that none but fools will trust unto them.

He had no sooner said this, but before there could be any room for a reply, they were all accosted by another man of a quite different shape and humour from this; more sad and melancholy, more rude, and of an heavier wit also, who crossed their way upon the right hand. He, making a stop a while as they passed by him, and hearing them talk of Jerusalem, made no more ado but chopped into their company, and told them, that if they were going thither they held a very unsafe course, and should wander in by-paths for ever, unless they went along with him in the way that he would show them. To be short; he pressed them so earnestly, with so loud a voice, and so much heat, that the sweat dropped down from his face: he did little less than thunder among them, and threatened them

[e] ['also vain,' ed. 1670; 'all too vain,' 1687.]

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with eternal destruction if they did not hearken to him. And, in fine, he told them that he had cause to be thus vehement; for he was sure he was in the right, and could not misguide them. I like you the worse for that, said the young pilgrim, (who thought himself sufficient to deal with this Hotspur,) and we should have believed you sooner if you had not pretended to infallibility, and withal been so uncharitable. We met with your elder brother just now, whom you see here, though perhaps you are not well acquainted with him. And if we could be moved at all with confidence, and the pretences of an unerring spirit, he had got the start of you, and you had come too late to beg our assent. You both set up an oracle, but his is the ancienter of the two, and more resorted unto, and far better customed than yours. I wish that both your pretensions were more modest; for methinks there is nothing so hateful as a man that gives us nothing but words, and is angry that we will not believe him. It would put a wise man into a passion to see one use threatening gestures instead of arguments; and provoke him to think the use of speech a mischief, when he hears poor and simple stuff uttered in terms that carry the style of edicts. But, besides this, I observe, that as this man would have pulled out mine eyes, so you would pull away from me my guide. You would have me travel alone by my own fancy, and take myself to be as wise as the best. But, for my part, I will always be of the religion which reverences the conductors of souls; and am glad with all mine heart that I have met with one both to teach and to watch over me. He would lead me as if I was a beast, and had no understanding, and you would have me run like a madman on my own head; but there is a middle between these, and that is reason under the guidance of the wise. He would take away all judgment from us, and you would have us take it all to ourselves. I like neither, but would take some, and leave the rest to others. Do not think but that I will judge for myself; but yet I will take a director with me as God hath appointed, that so I may see to judge the better. Give me my eyes, say I to him that lays his hands upon them: and yet I cry to my guide, when I see the clearest, Lend me yours, for they are like to be better than mine own. A great many eyes are safer than one. Others may see that which I cannot discover myself. Interest, pride, passion, and prejudice, have too great an hand in our own de-

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terminations; if I can find none that are quite void of them, yet I will consult with those that are like to have less than myself; and if I cannot judge according to their sense, yet I will never impose my own upon them. If I cannot follow, yet I will not presume to lead. If I cannot be so humble as to quit my reason, yet I will not be so arrogant as to take upon me to guide them, or to become a confident teacher of others. Modesty instructs me to think, that if they may mistake, much more may I: that if they, whose work it is to inquire into truth, are not secure from error, then I cannot claim that privilege, who have many other businesses to attend. I will neither therefore contradict their opinion, nor deny my own. I will neither for the present become their follower, nor yet forsake their guidance.

The stranger did not expect to be encountered with such an opposition as this, and so betrayed a little amazement at it. And, besides, he was the more confounded, when the pilgrim, espying a dagger by his side, and a pistol peeping out of his pocket, thus proceeded to discourse to him. But though you two are so different in your opinions, yet methinks you conspire too much in your cruel practices. That young weapon of yours, which I see at your girdle, doth make me start. Your dagger, I doubt, when it is a little fleshed, will in a short time grow to be a sword. You are of the same persecuting spirit with your neighbour, and will suffer nobody to be of a contrary mind to yourself. And it is the worse in you, because you have often pretended to liberty, and will give none. It is yourself, I see, that you love, and nobody else. You cry out of those burdens, which you are ready to lay on other men's backs. You do that of which you complain; and desire only to change places with those against whom you perpetually murmur. If you could but agree in other things, it would be best for you to go together, and leave us to ourselves. Though we would willingly come to a fair accord, (being, I hope, the children of peace,) yet I doubt you are of the humour of those men who are so obstinate that they will not stoop a jot, nor bow their heads, though it be to take up such a blessed thing as peace. It is very sad indeed that there should be such natures found in the world; but it is so apparent that there are, that you will have a difficult task of it to clear yourself from the imputation

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of being of that wilful party. Though Peace lie at their feet, and entreat them to condescend a little for its sake, they do not love it so well as to purchase it with the least abatement of their own desires. There is no way to divert their imagination from the object on which it is pitched; and if they be once resolved a thing must be done, all the world cannot change them from their aim. They are enemies to all accommodation, and so tied to the forms they prescribe themselves, that it is impossible to reduce them to any equity, or to render them capable to remit of their rigour. Nay, so far do some men forget themselves, that as many who observe it have complained, they would rather fall than descend and come down. They desire all or nothing: they seek death, or else victory. As for peace, which lies between both, and which ought always to be sought for by the vanquished, and desired by the victorious, they nothing care, unless they may have it on their own terms and conditions. If you intend, then, to have our company, you must throw away this stubborn, stiff, and resolute disposition, which makes men lose peace for little or nothing. A yielding, compliant, and gentle nature is the great friend of peace, and the only soil wherein it will grow. For the preparing of which soil, there is nothing so necessary as humility. It is pride generally that makes men so obstinate and pertinacious. A conceit of themselves makes them fondly imagine that everybody must submit to them, and they to none. This therefore is as great an enemy to our happy agreement as any the world hath. It obstructs all passages to it; it makes a man stand upon punctilios and formalities, as if they were of equal consideration to peace and unity. It prefers the least trifle which supports its grandeur before the greatest blessings that heaven can bestow. It makes men endlessly wrangle, when all that they can say signifies nothing but that they have no mind to yield. You are better skilled than I, it is to be presumed, in the history of ancient times; and you cannot well choose but remember something of a contest between the Athenians and king Philip about an isle that he had taken from them, and had a mind to restore. But then you cannot also but call to mind how learnedly one of their proud orators advised them, that if the words of the treaty did import that he gave it to them, they should refuse it. He would rather have them lose

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that which they could not get, than not have it by way of surrender and restitution to them. Was not this a strange foolery? What was it else but to prize the vanity of a word before the solidity of the thing, as one hath observed on that story? to stand upon a fancy and shadow of honour, when a real interest was concerned? But such is the nature of pride, which thinks itself disgraced if you pluck an hair out of its head; and takes itself to be undone if it lose but a word. Pride would have it so; and that will be obeyed, though men suffer soundly for it. And are not most of the controversies that divide the world about matters of the like high moment? Are they not in great part a scuffling about syllables, and a fighting with shadows and idols of our own imagination? Is not there very hot bickerings about hard phrases? And is it not thought enough to make a man be killed if he do not believe a barbarous word? Consider whether your weapons are not like to be engaged in these doughty quarrels: whether you have not sharpened them to serve in the cause of words. I doubt those that I see you armed withal are provided to protect cobwebs, and to defend the idle dreams and phantasms of sophisters. But is not the world in a sad case in the mean time? Is it not very strange that it should be so much at leisure? They know very well sure how to live and how to die, or else they would find themselves something else to do. It seems God hath not told them enough to employ them, and so they invent words out of their own brain about which to fight eternally. Away, for shame, with this vanity and pride. Away with this conceitedness, which hath thus embroiled the whole earth, and seeks to draw heaven into the contention too. If you would have us join with you in any thing, it must be in our prayers, that God would give men such a right sense of themselves that they may become humble and lowly in heart. To this we will say Amen, both for ourselves and all others. We will beg this day and night, that he would incline men's hearts to peace, by inclining them to yield one to another; that he would bestow upon them a soft and gentle disposition of mind; that he would mollify their hardness, and smooth the roughness and severity of their spirits; that all may be willing to quit their particular desires for the general good; that self-denial may have as great a place in all men's hearts as it hath in our religion; and that

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all who call themselves after the name of Christ may learn of their Master, who was *meek and lowly in heart;* who did not *cry, neither was his voice heard in the street;* who did *not quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed:* who did *bear with the infirmities* of those that followed him, and is now *such an High Priest as can have compassion on the ignorant and them that are out of the way.* Of these things we can be infallibly assured; and if you have a mind to be as confident of other matters which we think either doubtful or false, trouble not the world with it, and we will not trouble you nor envy to you the height of your illumination.

CHAP. XXXV.

A discourse with some pilgrims that were going to Loretto, the holy land, or such like places. How much such persons are abused and cheated. The judgment of St. Gregory Nyssen of these pilgrimages. The privileges which Rome boasts of above all other places. And what a market is there held continually for pardons. Of which a lease may be bought of many thousand years, for a small matter.

When the two champions (for so they esteemed themselves) saw that there was no ground to be won of these men, they thought it best to quit the field, especially since the night was coming on apace to part them. They made therefore but a short return to what had been objected to them, and then both sides expressing all the kindness that might be towards each other, and promising to live in charity, they took their several courses. And as for our two friends, they did but rid themselves of this company to make room for a new. For having bequeathed their wearied bones to rest in such a bed as they could get, betimes the next morning they met with a cluster of pilgrims (as they called themselves) in a very poor habit, and much weather-beaten; who were got together under a tree, relating their several pilgrimages which either they intended, or had already performed. To this company they were very desirous to join themselves a while; and it being admitted, they

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found one of them telling how holy a place mount Sinai was, which he was going to visit with great devotion. And I, said another, shall go your way; for there is a vow upon me to go and see the oak of Mamre, under which Abraham entertained the angels. But first, said a third, let us go to Jerusalem, whither I am bound, to see the sanctified places which our Saviour's feet have trod: the place where he made the *Pater noster*, and where the apostles made the Creed: the olive tree also still standing hard by the house of Annas, to which Christ was tied when they brought him to be examined by him. For you must know, by the way, that Annas being fast asleep when he was taken, and they being loath to awake him, they got a cord and bound our Saviour to this tree, lest he should slip away before the high-priest arose. But especially I intend to visit the holy sepulchre, and to behold the place where he lay, which I have heard is an action very meritorious. And I, said a fourth, am engaged to go to our lady of Loretto to see the very chamber where she was born, and where she was educated by Joachim her father and Ann her mother; and where the angels came to her and she conceived our Lord. This, I hope, is as meritorious, if not more, as to travel to his grave (and besides it is a shorter journey); for I have heard one say of this place, as I believe you never heard any say of the other, that the words of Jacob do well befit it, *This place is dreadful, it is no other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven*[1]. You speak so highly of these holy places, saith a fifth, that I should have a great mind to accompany you to some of them, were I not now returning home from a pilgrimage which I have made to St. James of Compostella, wherein I have spent more time than I could well spare from my necessary affairs. O then, said the father (who had listened attentively all this while to them without speaking a word), you have brought home, I presume, to your family one feather at least of the holy cock or hen, which are kept in a certain church of an ancient city not far from that place. I hope you will favour us with a sight of it, for here is no air stirring to blow it away, if it should chance to fall; and this company, I believe, would be glad if you would bless their lips with a kiss of it. I do not know well what you

[1] [Gen. xxviii. 17.]

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mean, said the man, for I never so much as heard of any such thing. That is very strange, replied the father, that they should either suffer so sacred a breed to perish, or that the fame of them should not come to your ears. There is scarce any pilgrim that passes that way who doth not go to see them, and therefore I may well marvel that you should hear no news of them: though I shall sooner believe that, than that they should be so careless as to let those holy chickens die, whose great grandfather and grandmother were so miraculous an instance of the virtue of St. James of Compostella! I pray, sir, said another of them, be pleased to let us hear the story of these sacred creatures, for we are all, I believe, very ignorant of it. I will tell it you then, said he, just as I received it from a person of no mean account, that lived in Sicily, but was well acquainted with all these countries[m]. There was on a time a certain man, a great friend of God (whose name he was pleased to conceal), who undertook a pilgrimage, together with his wife and son, to the saint forenamed. It was their fortune, being in their journey thither, to take up their quarters one night in an old city not many miles from it; they being not able that day to reach as far as Compostella. Now in the house that entertained them, you must know there was a maid not so good as she was pretty, who beholding the beauty of their son fell in love with him: and made such undecent expressions of it, that he was forced to be more uncivil to her than otherwise he should have been. This turned her love into a great hatred, and made her study a revenge, which she took in this manner. There being a little silver cup which they used in their chamber, she neatly conveyed it into his capouch, and when they were gone out of the city, caused them to be pursued by the *alcade* or justice of the place, and accused them of theft. When the father and mother had been searched and nothing was found, they were something troubled at the molestation which they had given them; but as soon as ever they came to the son, they happened to feel it there, where they little expected to have found it; and so carried them back again. The young man being brought before the justice could only deny the fact, but was no way able to purge himself, and therefore was con-

[m] Luc. Marinæus de Reliq. [De Reb. Hispan. lib. v. tom. i. p. 349, Hispaniæ illustratæ per Andr. Schott.]

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demned to be hanged. On the gallows then his father and mother were fain to leave him, and, as the story goes, there he hung by the neck till they had been at Compostella, and performed all their vows to the saint. And his mother going to visit the gibbet at her return, and to spend a few tears at the place of execution, found him in the very same posture wherein they left him. But she had not poured out many complaints, nor looked upon him long with her eyes full of tears, before he called out to her and said, Dear mother, weep no more, I beseech you, for me, for I am not dead, as you imagine, but alive; being preserved by the mother of God and the intercession of St. James, whom you went to honour, from suffering the death which my enemies intended me. Go to the judge therefore, and make no longer stay here: let him know how it is, that I was accused out of mere malice, unjustly condemned, and thus miraculously saved by them that protect the innocent and are grateful to their worshippers. She did so, without examining him any further about the matter: and the judge was just sat down to dinner, when she came running in, saying, Sir, I beseech you, cause my son to be taken down, and let him hang yonder no longer, for though I must confess that he is still alive, yet it is by the power of God and his saints. At which news he smiling said, Good woman, be content; thy son is as much alive as these two birds: pointing to a cock and hen which were ready roasted upon the table before him. He had no sooner said the word, but they both leaped out of the dish, and walked about the table, being as ready for a dinner as himself. And as for the cock, he moreover clapped his wings and fell a crowing for joy to find them unpinioned, and to feel that he did not carry his gizzard thereabouts any longer. Which when the judge beheld, he was the most astonished man that ever was seen, and could not of a good while recover himself to speak a word. But as soon as ever the passion was over, away he went without so much as thinking of his dinner, and called the priest with the principal men of the city, who all went together to the place where the youth was hanged; and found it, to their no small wonderment, just as the good woman had said. Whereupon he was cut down and restored to his parents; but the cock and hen, as more sacred things, were carried in much solemnity to the great church; and there a coop was made for them, that

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they might be preserved as a monument of the great power of God. Of what colour they were before, my author said he did not know; but after their resurrection they were of a pure white snow-like colour. It is uncertain also what they did while the judge was gone to the place of execution, but afterward it is not to be doubted they lived very purely. For seven years being prefixed by God for the term of this new life which they had received, they left no more than two chickens behind them when they died; nor had they ever any more issue. These two also lived just the same number of years, and had the like posterity; and so it hath continued in that order to this day. Now all knowing men judge it no less than a miracle that the cock should never tread the hen above once in his life: and then that he begets just two eggs: and that one of these always brings forth a cock, and the other an hen: and that at the punctual time of seven years' end, which you know is a perfect number, they leave the world and rest in peace. For though the reporter of this did not tell me what became of their bodies, yet you may be sure that they never came upon the spit more. And as for their feathers, the mention of which occasioned the telling of this story, you must know that they are preserved as an holy relic, and all people that pass to St. James through this city use to visit this church and obtain one of them. And here now is another wonder, that though there are innumerable persons which pass through it, yet they never want feathers; as he tells me who was at the place, and himself wore one of them continually about him.

O sir, said he that had been at Compostella, how happy a man should I have thought myself, if it had been my fortune to meet with you before I took this long journey. I had then been a great deal richer than I am, and brought a treasure home with me, which now, alas! I want. I could be tempted, if my occasions would yield to it, to return back, if it were but to see the faces of this chaste pair, who never come together, but only to beget such another blessed couple as themselves. Who knows what virtue it might infuse into one's mind? or of what power so holy a relic is against all the assaults of the enemy? Well, I shall never see a roasted pullet more, but I shall sigh at my loss: and yet I believe I shall see one very

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often, for it is a dish I love very well. But I pray, sir, did you ever meet with any body that had one of those precious feathers?

The good man was sorely grieved to see the simplicity and innocence of such persons as they seemed to be so easily abused; and therefore he thought good to undisguise himself, and answered him in plain manner to this effect. No, truly, nor do I care one straw whether I ever do or no. For though I have heard this story very confidently related, yet I would be sorry if you should think me so credulous as to receive it for a truth. Nay, I should hold myself worthy to be chronicled for a fool, should I value one of those feathers any more than such an one as a fool wears in his cap. And I cannot but wonder that men with such reverend beards as yours should surrender your belief to such sottish tales. You seem otherwise sagacious enough, and therefore whence is it that your heads are fraught with such fumes that they cannot discern the grossness of these cheats? If you can swallow a lie so great as this, sure the story of Gargantua will not stick with you, but go down easily: who, cutting up a miraculously great colewort in his garden, within the leaves of which six pilgrims like yourselves lay asleep, eat it and them one morning for his breakfast in a sallet. Nay, you will be able to digest what follows; how that one of those got into an hollow tooth that was in his mouth, and so saved himself. For wondering into what gulf it was that he was fallen, he tried if it were possible to feel any bottom; and at last gave his tooth such a prick with the pike end of his staff, that the giant immediately spit him out. At least I may well think, that if you had lived an age or two agone, you would have gone to do your devotion to Thomas à Becket; reverently kissing his breeches, and laying your lips with much affection to the handkerchief wherewith he was wont to wipe his snotty nose[a]. Nay, be not offended, I beseech you, at the expression, nor think that I speak with too much rudeness; for they thought it none, I will assure you, heretofore to offer to the people's salutation such an holy relic, as

[a] Erasm. Colloq. Peregr. Reli. ergo. [i. e. Perigrinatio religionis ergo, Opp. tom. i. col. 785 E.]

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had the very prints and footsteps of the snot still remaining upon it.

I cannot but be offended, said one of the company, at these reflections of yours upon the story you have told us, and methinks you do very ill to laugh at such serious things; which are also attested by so many and so good authors, that if your heart was not very stony and hard to entertain any thing, you could not but admit them for truth. If they were worthy a serious confutation, replied the father, I should but render myself ridiculous by laughing at them. But since they appear to all unprejudiced men to be mere fopperies, it is, I think, our duty to smile at them. For the holy Scripture itself doth plainly mock at the folly and absurdness of some men's opinions and doings. You remember sure how Elijah flouted at Baal and his worshippers, when he said, Perhaps their God was a talking with somebody, and could not hear them both together; or he might not be at home, and so could give no answer; or else so fast asleep, (having eaten perhaps too much the night before of the sacrifices which they brought him,) except they called still louder he would not awake[b]. And so the mount of Olives is called by way of contempt, not *Har Mischeh*, the 'mount of unction,' but *Har Maschith*, the *mount of corruption*[c]. And the place which Jacob had called *Bethel*, the *house of God*, is called by the prophet in scorn by the name of *Beth-aven*, the 'house of iniquity[d].' And thus a wise man hath long ago taught us, whom you reverence as well as I, that "many things are thus to be refelled, lest by our seriousness they should be at all honoured[e]." They ought to be laughed out of countenance, lest we do them too much respect by our grave handling of them. And yet I have not done so much, because I think these things are so grossly ridiculous, that they laugh themselves to scorn. I have only told the plain story of them, and that confutes itself sufficiently. To expose things of this nature to the world is abundantly to disprove them. To bring them into view is to put them to shame, and make them hide their face.

[b] 1 Kings xviii. 27; and see Isa. xliv. 15, 16, 17.

[c] 2 Kings xxiii. 13.

[d] Hosea iv. 15.

[e] [Multa sunt sic digna revinci, ne gravitate adorentur,] Tertul. adv. Valent. [cap. 6. p. 252 C.]

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To make mention of them is enough to silence them. We need not be at the trouble to abuse them, for they make invectives against themselves, and carry their own satires in their bosom. Not to speak of them is the only civility we can do them. It is necessary to shut our eyes, if you would not have us smile at the folly which they reveal to us. We do not first strip them, and then lay the lash upon them; for as soon as they appear, they discover their own nakedness, and carry a whip at their own backs. But suppose any of them be more neatly contrived and cunningly painted, the better to deceive, would you not have us pull off the mask, or wash off the paint, that we may show things in their proper colours? That is all that we intend: and therefore be not angry at it. If we should throw never so much salt in your face, you would receive no harm, unless you be raw and ulcerous. But, I beseech you, what are the authors you speak of, upon whose credit we are to receive these things? are they not such as need somebody of more credit to be their vouchers? To cite the authority of such men, is as if you should bring those for your sureties, for whose honesty, not only certificates, but also pawns and engagements of bodies would be required from other men that are better known than themselves. Not only we, but some that believe as you do in other things, have the honesty to accuse the fraud of the first beginners of these stories, and the folly of them that follow their sotteries. They do not stick to say that they are very dull people, and such as never are wont to blow their noses, who do not smell the forgery of them that first stuff their sermons, and then their writings with such like tales. Nay, in plain words they tell us, that all histories within seven or eight hundred years last past are so hydropically swollen with lying legends, that a man would think the authors of them had made it their main strife, who should advance the greatest number.

Then, said one of the pilgrims, you do not believe, I warrant, the story of St. John the Evangelist appearing to St. Edward the Confessor in such an habit as you now see us wear, and craving an alms of him: who gave him his ring off from his finger, knowing nothing but that he was a poor man that stood in need of a great charity. Did not God do a great honour

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herein to pilgrimages and the holy relics which they went to visit? Indeed, said the father again, I have not faith enough to believe it; and I wonder much how you came to know that St. John went a begging to that pious prince. O, said the other, that is a thing not hard to know, for, as a certain abbot hath told us[f], St. John himself revealed it to two Englishmen, as they were going to visit the holy sepulchre. For they being in danger to lose themselves in an unknown country, were directed in their way by that blessed apostle: who told them they should have a prosperous voyage, and that God and he would be propitious to them for their good king's sake, whom I loved (said he) very tenderly for the excellency of his chastity. I am John the apostle, and you shall carry back this ring to him which he gave me some days since; and let him know that the day of his death approaches, and that six months shall not pass over his head ere I put him into the company of those virgins which follow the Lamb wheresoever he goes. Truly, replied the father with a smile, I am no more satisfied than I was before; and cannot possibly resign up my belief to any such relations of the dronish monks of those days. This story seems to me to be just as true as another which the same abbot reports; how that St. Edward one day saw Jesus Christ himself upon the altar, stretching forth his hand to bless him with the sign of the cross, as he was worshipping of the host, and adoring the divine presence there. A thing that was never talked of till he was dead, as the author of it acknowledges: and then it was pretended that he had given it in charge to the earl, that saw this apparition with him, and conjured him most sacredly that he should say nothing of it while he lived. Which is as much as to say, that it should not be told while it could be confuted by that good king, who would have made this lie to have stuck in the author's throat.

I perceive, said another of the pilgrims, that you have obstinately bolted your heart against all these pious stories; but yet I hope you do not disallow of all pilgrimages, nor think it unprofitable for the soul's health to go to Jerusalem to worship

[f] [Ælred, abbot of Rievaulx, in his narrative De vita et miraculis Edwardi Confessoris; in Twysden's Historiæ Anglicanæ Scriptores, col. 397.]

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at the sepulchre of our Lord. To tell you the truth, replied he, all is alike to me. I do not imagine there is any holiness in that land more than in any other; nor can I have an opinion of any sanctity that I shall bring away with me if I should go thither. And therefore it is far better to employ ourselves well at home, than to take so long a journey to do that which may as well be done in any other place. That is strange, answered the other; I see now you matter not though you disbelieve the Scriptures themselves, which give us many examples of holy pilgrimages: as the lame, you know, and the blind went up to Jerusalem to be healed in the pool of Bethesda[g]; and the eunuch came out of Ethiopia to worship in that city; and at certain times all the people of Jerusalem went up to their feasts; which, I have been told, were all so many pilgrimages. But howsoever that be, you may see, if you will, that they are as old as Christ himself, and were conceived, as wise men judge, at the very same time with him. For he went a pilgrimage, in the womb of his mother, to see Elizabeth in the hill country. And after that he went from Nazareth in Galilee to Bethlehem Judah, when she was near the time of her travail. And as he honoured pilgrimages thus in his mother's belly, so afterward, when he hung on her breast, he travelled into Egypt; and after that returned into Judæa, and every year went up to the temple of Jerusalem[h].

I have waited a great while, said the father, who here interrupted him, for some word or other that should drop from your mouth to the purpose; but I have no hopes to meet with it. Sure you have forgot what you were speaking about, and some holy feather or toy hath taken you in the head, which you dreamt you should find at last in some of these places. Do you think that we go a pilgrimage every time we take a journey, or go to the next church, or make a friend a visit, or are carried to the bath in a litter for our health? Or was there something sacred in Augustus his officers, or any holy relics in Egypt, which the blessed Virgin and our Saviour went to do some adoration unto? Yes, said the other, who was glad to catch hold of this last word; there were the bones of Jeremiah

[g] V. Rhem. Test. [in Act. viii. 27. p. 281. 4to. Rhemes, 1633.]
[h] Pits., lib. 3. cap. 2. de Peregr. [p. 93.]

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the prophet, to which perhaps they paid a respect; for he lay buried in the royal city, and was always honoured by the Egyptians for the singular benefits which they received from him. You are ignorant, perhaps, that the crocodiles and many hurtful serpents were banished their coast by his intercession; and that in the days of our forefathers the faithful were wont to go to his tomb and say their prayers; and bringing away some of the dust of that place, it was a certain cure for those who were hurt by any venomous beast. Indeed, replied he, we are much indebted to the author of this legend, who hath acquainted us with some other things which the holy writers forgot to tell us. As, that the prophet Jeremiah foretold to the Egyptians that all their images should fall to the ground when a Virgin and her Son should come into that land. Which was the cause, saith he, that even in those days they placed a virgin in her bed, and an infant in a manger, and gave adoration to them. Of which when the reason was demanded by king Ptolemy (you must not inquire which of them), the priests answered that it was a mystery delivered by their elders, which they received from the holy prophet. Perhaps, then, you think that the blessed Virgin went to let her Son see these fine pictures of himself and her: or that they took this journey to provide themselves with a boxfull of that holy dust against a time of need. Sure, if the Jews had but known any thing of that knack, it would have served them very much; and they would have maintained that he did many of his miracles in the virtue of their great prophet. Was this the reason, think you, that they said Jeremiah was risen from the dead? What do you think of us, that you should imagine it possible to captivate our belief to such lubberly lies as these? Certainly you take us for very thick-skulled people; or else they are so themselves, who, bestowing their time rather in gleaning what is scattered up and down in every place than in weighing the authority of the men from whom they borrow their notes, have filled their books and the world with whole cart-loads of these chimerical stories.

Here the man, having continued mute a while, at last burst out into these words, not without some passion: Well, I will produce an unanswerable place; *Where the body is, there will*

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the eagles be gathered together[i]. What say you now? Is this also to no purpose? Must we not all go thither where the body of our Saviour is? Alas! replied the father, what an ignorance have I lived in ever since I was born! Is the body of Christ then in the possession of the Turks? Have those infidels got our Lord into their hands? Was that the end of the holy war, to redeem him from captivity, and rescue him out of the power of his enemies? I, poor soul, verily believed all this while that he had been in the heavens, in the Jerusalem which is above; whither I and my companion are travelling as fast as we can. Thither if you have a mind to go, come along with us. We will fly, if you please, like so many eagles. *We will run, and not be weary; we will walk, and not faint*[j]: we will stretch our wings to their utmost extent, and not be tired. In this pilgrimage we are content to spend our whole lives, but shall think that we are very much out of our way should we enter with you upon any other. Here he gave them a short description of the manner of their life, and showed them how and where they sought for Jesus. He discoursed of humility, of charity, and the rest of the virtues which are so eminent in our Saviour's example: the imitation of whom, said he, was ever held the highest honour and worship that could be given him. By this he continues still in the world. He is every where to be seen in his faithful followers. They bring his living walking image into every place: they expose him to open view at home and abroad: they endeavour to have their houses and their shops in such good order, that you need not go to Jerusalem to find an holy place. They would save men the labour of taking a long pilgrimage to visit the shrines of the saints; for they become such themselves, and are the best relics of them which the world affords. And lest you should think, added he, that we adhere too much to our own opinions, and put too great a slight upon the pilgrimages in which you are engaged, let me entreat you patiently to hear what a person of great authority with you speaks of them, in an age when they had but newly begun to gain a reputation among men.

[i] V. Pits., p. 105. [lib. iii. cap. 4. For this application of the text, Matt. xxiv. 28, he cites Hieron. Ep. 17. ad Marcell., which epistle is more correctly assigned to Paula ad Eustochium by Vallarsi, in whose edition of S. Jerome it is numbered Epist. xlvi. tom. i. col. 205 A.]

[j] [Is. xl. 31.]

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"A man may think, perhaps," saith St. Gregory Nyssen[k], "that he doth a thing of great note, and much to be valued, when he takes a journey to the place where our Lord was buried. But he himself, when he speaks of those that shall inherit the kingdom of heaven, doth not mention the pilgrimages to Jerusalem as a worthy undertaking: nor when he pronounces his beatitudes, doth he at all commend this labour and diligence. Why should any man, therefore, trouble himself about that which will not make him blessed, nor dispose him at all for his celestial inheritance? And if there were no dangers (as there are too many) of being defiled and corrupted in the passage thither by sundry vices, yet what shall a man be the better when he arrives in safety there? Is our Lord to be found there more than in the place where at present we are? or is there a greater measure of the Holy Spirit at Jerusalem, which will not vouchsafe to come hither? Must we go so far to fetch its comforts? and will it not be intreated to impart them nearer at hand? Truly I must needs say that I see more devotion, more piety, more of all divine virtues in this very place than there is to be found. I myself went thither once upon my occasions, yet I did not feel myself a whit the wiser or the better by it. What I believed then, I believed before; what I did there, I could do before I went thither; and I reaped no greater benefit by my journey than to find that the places where we live are more holy than those that we so much admire. You therefore that fear God, praise him there where you have your present abode, and trouble not yourselves to seek any other place wherein to do him honour. The change of place will never bring you nearer to him: but be you where you will, there God will be too, if your souls be fit to give him lodging, and receive so holy a guest. If you have your inward man full of perverse and evil thoughts, though you were in Golgotha, though you stood upon mount Olivet, though you lay even under the monument of the resurrection, you are as far from entertaining Christ as the stones that inclosed him. I advise therefore all the brethren, that they travel out of the body to the Lord, and not to go out of Cappadocia to Palestine."

[k] Orat. Περὶ τῶν ἐπιόντων εἰς Ἱεροσολ. [tom. iii. p. 651 sqq.]

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And in another place, writing to certain devout persons, he tells them that there is nothing more pleasant than to converse with pious souls, and to behold what things the grace of our Lord hath done for them. "It is no less," saith he[1], "than a festival, and presents us with such goodly spectacles, that one cannot but think he sees, in an heart full of God, both Bethlehem and Golgotha, and the mount of Olives, and the place of the resurrection. Show me a man in whom Christ is formed by a good conscience; who by the fear of God is nailed to the cross; who hath rolled away the burdensome stone of worldly vanity, and, being got out of the tomb of his body, *walks in newness of life;* who, leaving the low and creeping life of the world in which he was buried, ascends by the force of lofty desires to the celestial conversation; who, setting his affections on things above, is not weighed down by the weight of his body, but made so light and etherial by a purer life, that his flesh becomes like a bright cloud, which is willing to mount up with him to the things on high: this person, in my judgment, deserves to be numbered among those so much celebrated things in which we may plainly see the monuments of the kindness of our Lord towards us."

Thus that great man delivers his opinion to us, and we cannot but readily yield him our assent. These are the holy places which we desire to behold. A man dying unto sin presents us with the fairest sight of Christ's sepulchre: it sets us upon Mount Olivet when we meet with a soul of a celestial conversation. And I thank our Lord very much that I see such manifest marks and footsteps of these things in this my friend, in whom the burying, the rising again, and the ascension of Christ is most lively pictured before mine eyes. As for those places in Palestine where you are going to adore, if they were so little worth in those days, I think their place is more fallen now; and if they that lived nearer to them thought good to stay at home, it will be a silly piece of superstition in us to travel so far in devotion to them.

It is very true, said one of the company, I am convinced by

[1] [Epist. ad Eustath. &c. tom. iii. p. 655.]

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what this person hath discoursed, that we need not go to Jerusalem. There is a place nearer at hand of greater sanctity, and richer in all spiritual treasures, and that is Rome. There, as I have been informed, you may see several pilgrims, (and in time may have that honour yourself,) who dine every day in the presence of the vicar of Christ, and that of meat from his own table, and blessed by his own most holy hands. This, methinks, is a great deal better than to kiss a cold stone, or to take a mouthful of air on the top of a mountain. And besides this, which is the least part of their entertainment, there is more excellent provision made for their souls, the church of St. John Lateran[m] affording no less than forty-eight years of pardon every day in the year, together with the pardon of the third part of all a man's sins. And if you would have some other kind of food for your souls which is more visible, there is in that church to be beheld, among other relics, some of the fragments of the five barley loaves and the two fishes wherewith Christ fed five thousand men. Some poor body, I suppose, on whom they might be bestowed after dinner, brought them thither, being satisfied by the mere sight of them, and hoping that others might be so in after-times. But the more probable opinion is, (since the poor and rich were admitted to that feast,) that the fragments falling to the share of those that waited at the table, and there being just twelve baskets full in all; each of the twelve apostles had one for his portion; and that St. Peter saved his that he might bring it to Rome, of which he foresaw that he should be made bishop. But to return to what I began to say concerning the pardon of sin, which I suppose you all most earnestly desire; the liberal grant

[m] Fiscus Papalis, cap. 2. ["Fiscus Papalis, sive catalogus indulgentiarum et reliquarum (sic) septem principalium ecclesiarum urbis Romæ, ex vetusto manuscripto codice vere et fideliter descriptus:—A part of the Pope's Exchequer, that is, a catalogue of the indulgences and reliques belonging to the seven principall churches in Rome, &c. by a Catholike divine." Lond. 4to. 1621. The authorship of the work is due, beyond doubt, to William Crashaw, Preacher at the Temple, and author of 'Romish forgeries and falsifications,' 'The Jesuites Gospell,' and 'The bespotted Jesuite,' whose name is appended both to the title-page and preface, (Baker's MS. note quoted by Wood; yet in the copy in the library of the British Museum no name is attached;) though it has been attributed by many to Dr. Thomas James, the first keeper of the Bodleian Library, as Anthony à Wood relates in his life of the latter, Athen. Oxon. ii. 468.]

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already mentioned is but a mite to those vast treasures which two popes endowed that church withal, who gave thereto so many indulgences as none can number save God alone. So my author tells me, and if you doubt of it, pope Boniface witnesses to the truth of it in these words: If men, saith he, did but know the indulgences belonging to the church of St. John, and how many they were, they would never go so far beyond the sea as to the holy sepulchre in Jerusalem, but would rather spare so great a labour. For grant that they are absolved there both from the guilt and also from the punishment of their sins, this is no more than they have nearer at hand in the church of St. John. And do you not think it is a good bargain for a man to forsake totally his riches, and lands, and such like things, that he may purchase such an incredible mass of spiritual and divine riches? And yet you need not do so much; it is but going thither and leaving your goods for a time, and then, besides all these blessings, you shall come loadened home with a great deal more precious commodities, such as Agnus Dei's, holy pictures, blessed bread, sanctified wood, and a great many other invaluable jewels.

To this discourse when one listened very devoutly, and asked him if a man might have all this wealth at no greater charges but only going for it, he was a little at a stand, and told him that his words were not so to be interpreted as if he might go fetch such great blessings and carry no money with him, for there is nothing to be had at Rome unless you buy it. It is not to be expected that they should make holy things so cheap as to give them away for asking. It never was so since there were pilgrimages: but the good men that undertook them carried their purses full of money, and exchanged it for holy crosses, blessed grains, and such like things as I now mentioned. For else how could it be that one monastery in Helvetia should be enriched so much by the offerings of pilgrims who came thither, that it was able to take away the tiles that covered it, and instead thereof to lay on plates of gold and silver? But I hope then, replied the other, that I shall find all that true which you have said, and obtain so many pardons as you promise, which indeed I am willing to purchase at any rate. O, sir, said he again, you need not doubt at all of it. I have told you nothing yet of the holiness of that place, and

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the beauty of the church; which is not so much the mistress of the world as the mother of the faithful, the most indulgent mother that ever was. There is none can tell the vastness of her exchequer, and the liberal sums which issue out thence unto her children: in compare with which all that she receives from them is not worth the naming. In a little chapel of that church of St. John forementioned, there is a remission for all sins to be had every day. And not far from it there is a place of that holiness that you may have no less than three and thirty thousand years of pardon for once going up a pair of stairs. Is it possible? said the other: sure this is either not believed or not known, for otherwise all the world would go thither to be delivered from their sins. There is none, I assure you, replied he, but heretics who question the truth of it, and I cannot tell why men are so negligent of their salvation as not to flock more than they do to that holy city. The thing is plain enough, or was so not long ago, (and I doubt not of the care of the church to preserve things of such value,) for there is an ascent of three and thirty steps, and how oft soever any man devoutly goes up to the top of it, for every step he hath a thousand years of pardon. And wonder not at the thing, for these steps, you must know, were brought from Jerusalem, and are the very same which Christ ascended when he went up before Pontius Pilate to be judged by him. The women indeed may take it ill that they are not suffered to come into this chapel (it being called the holy of holies); and, to say the truth, I was much grieved for them when I first heard this, because I know that they have souls as well as we, and sins too. But afterward, having more diligently searched into the matter, I found that they will be no great losers by being shut out of this very sacred place. For though I do not know where they can get so many years of pardon at once, yet it is provided that they may have enough; and, lest they should murmur, I can tell them this for their comfort, that they may obtain them without the labour of going up a pair of stairs. For let but any pilgrim, of either sex, and at any time of the year, go to visit the church of St. Paul, and there are granted to all and every of them, by three gracious popes, no less than nine thousand years of pardon[n]. But if any one be so great a sinner,

[n] Fiscus Papalis, cap. 5.

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that he thinks all this is not sufficient, he may know that there are in the church of St. Peter so many indulgences that they are past numbering. And yet in the holy time of Lent, how many soever they be, they are all doubled[o]. I suppose that you will think it needless to have any more than all these, but if you are afraid, and would be still furnished with some additional indulgences, it is but going to the church of St. Mary of the people, and to those of St. Vitus, Modestus, and a thousand martyrs, and there you may have a great many thousand years of pardon more for every day, and besides as many fortieth parts, if you think them of any worth, after so large a stock, which sure you will never be able to spend[p].

Perhaps, said the father, it was intended that he should lend some to his poor neighbours, if he have no use of all this treasure himself, if some of them may not be able to go thither. And therefore, in my mind, (if all this be true,) a man ought not to refuse the least bit of the charity of the church, but go to all these places, and bring away as many ages of pardon as ever he can, that so he may be charitable unto others. No such matter, answered the other, they will do no good to those that do not go to fetch them; being the reward of the labour and pains that a man takes in a tedious pilgrimage. But then, said he again, methinks the church should be so charitable as to send greater store than it doth of these blessings to them that are not able to take a journey for them. And it hath made me wonder very much that Rome should be so holy a place, and that a pair of stairs there should be of so great virtue as to procure greater favours than the blood of Jesus Christ himself in any other country. For I have read that a little glassful of it was procured from the patriarch of Jerusalem and the master of the Templars, and sent to Henry the third king of England[q], and by him carried in great devotion on his bare feet, and in a beggar's habit, from the church of St. Paul to that of St. Peter's at Westminster: and yet there were but six years of pardon, and an hundred and sixteen (or at the most forty) days granted to those that should come to

[o] Fiscus Papalis, cap. 4. [p] Ib. cap. 14.
[q] Matth. Paris. [p. 735.] and Matth. West. an. 1247 aut 1250. [p. 339.]

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worship that holy relic. Doth it not seem to you very unreasonable that the steps on which he trod should exceed so much in efficacy the blood which he shed? Is there not a vast disproportion between three and thirty thousand years of pardon which the former procures, and six poor years which the latter bestows? How comes it to pass that the pope would do no greater honour to his blood, especially since they paid so dearly for it? For you must know that it was sent to comfort the people of England after he had miserably oppressed them, by levying huge sums of money and excommunicating all that refused to pay them. It seems to me as if the blood of Christ itself could do little or nothing unless it be at Rome. And yet that is not the business neither, for smaller things can do greater matters when the pope pleaseth. It is not many years agone since Clement VIII. sent some bags full of little crosses and blessed grains to be distributed among the people of France, accompanied with this indulgence, that whosoever had some of these grains in his beads should obtain an hundred years of pardon for every kiss that he should at any time bestow upon them. Here was a liberal grant indeed. You see what your holy father can do, if he list, by little trifles of his own making. And therefore all that I am able to conclude is only this, that nothing can work any more than the pope will let it; no, not the blood of Jesus Christ: and that he was more stern in those days when the English were enslaved to him; and now he is grown better natured, and studies by his kindness to oblige his subjects, lest they should all shake off the yoke he lays upon them. Or, if you had rather so conceive it, there is nothing that he can part withal unless you pay for it: only now and then he affords you a better pennyworth, and lets you have more for your money than at other times, that he may gain your custom, and induce you to trust him so much as to suffer him to use you as he pleases. And, truly, he used our forefathers so hardly, that I wonder they continued his chapmen so long. He put such base commodities, such counterfeit ware, into their hands, that I cannot tell what should keep them from discovering the cheat. I am ashamed when I think what fools he made of them; and how he used them like little infants, imposing what he thought good upon their belief. It makes me blush to reflect on all the toys

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wherewith he gulled them of their money. He seems to have had them in such servitude that he had scarce left them any souls of their own, but rifled them of all their reason. For was it not a strange sottishness to believe that he had bottled up the blood of Christ, which we know was carried into the heavens with him, that he might appear therewith before God for us and perfect our expiation? and yet there were a thousand of these tales that passed for current truth. Nay, a friar of Gaunt was wont to say that these godly frauds and cozenages were the milk which St. Paul gave to babes, as being unable to digest the harder meat. Since he intended therefore to keep the world always in its swaddling clouts, those nurses to whom he committed his children fed them with little else but this milk. Of which their bottles were so full, that it was held by wise men as good an argument to say, He is a friar, therefore he is a liar; as to say, This is white, therefore it hath a colour[8]. It would be only to deflour the time, or else I could give you a large catalogue of their forgeries. And if this little that hath been said will not serve to open your eyes to see the fraud, you may go on to traffic with Rome as those before you have done. But if it vend such merchandise as this, methinks you should judge it no more to your profit to go thither than into Turkey; and that city should be as little in your thoughts as the earthly Jerusalem.

CHAP. XXXVI.

How the pilgrim had a fair sight of the heavenly Jerusalem; and what ensued thereupon. How easy it is by a true and passionate friendship to learn the greatest love to God; and that he is to be studied and admired in all his creatures, as well as in his Son Christ.

THE young man was glad to hear him speak these words, because they looked like a conclusion. And therefore pulling him by the sleeve, he prayed him not to wait for their answer, but leave them to muse of what he had represented so plainly to their minds. And I wish, said he, (turning towards them,)

[8] Walsingh. Rich. 2. [Historiæ, p. 281.]

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that if you regard not this discourse, there was some such person here as St. Gregory, to whom you bear a reverence, that he might tell you what he thought of your intended pilgrimages to Rome, Loretto, and such-like places. No doubt he would inveigh more sharply against them than those into Palestine. Think, I beseech you, upon his words; and if you be not pleased to go along with us, yet forbear at least these needless though expensive journeys, and reserve your money for some uses that will turn to a better account. And so, having civilly taken their leaves of each other, he and his guide held on their way to that holy place where Jesus himself now resides. Several things they discoursed of, and many good things they did as they went along; till at last, having gained the top of an high hill, (which without some difficulty could not be climbed,) they met with a knot of more excellent persons, who recompensed for the tediousness of that company into which they had lately fallen. The spectacle which presented itself was no less wonderful than it was new; for there they beheld sundry pilgrims like themselves, who had placed their bodies, though in several postures, as if they never meant to stir from that place, unless it was to be carried directly up to heaven. Some of them were fallen upon their knees, and, with their hands upon their breasts, their eyes elevated toward the skies, and a very smiling countenance, they seemed not so much to ask as to possess something that they dearly loved, and for which they rendered thanks to God: others of them stood gazing upon their tip-toes, with their mouths open, and their eyes so fixed, as if their souls were gone half way out of their bodies to fetch in something which they hungered to receive: and others also stretched out their arms to such a length, as if either they saw that thing coming to them, or else they thought them to be wings whereby they could fly to that which they looked so greedily upon. For this they observed, after a careful view of them, that every one directed his eyes the same way, as if they waited for the very same good to descend into their embraces. And therefore these two persons, being not so much startled as ravished at this strange sight, thought it was best for them to do so too, and to try if they could make any discovery of that which attracted all these eyes and hearts unto it. And they had not done so very long,

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but by the advantage of this mountain, and the clearness of the air, and the steadiness of their eyes, and the quiet and silence wherein they all were, they had a very fair prospect of the heavenly Jerusalem.

Now (you may be sure) our pilgrim's heart skipped for joy; and he began to bless the happy day which brought him hither, vowing that it should be marked in his calendar for an holy-day as long as he lived. For he was not only assured hereby that there was such a place, but he discovered something of the felicities of it, which here met him with a delicious entertainment. It did not seem to be situate in a region like to any that he had as yet beheld, but in one so clear and pure that the sky is but a smoky vapour in compare with it. There was no cloud that durst be so bold as to come within sight of it, nor was there any darkness that could approach to sully its beauty. But as there was a perpetual serenity about it, so an everlasting day was one of the principal ornaments of it. The rays of the sun, he perceived, never hid themselves from it; if he judged aright, when by the glittering of the place he thought it all gilded with his beams. But sometimes he conceited that the city was all built of such precious stones; that they supplied the place of the sun, by those streams of light which issued forth from every one of them. Nay, the very garments of the inhabitants (which he could discern a little) were so glistering, that they seemed able of themselves to create a continual day to those that wore them. He beheld also some winged people (for such are they that dwell there) come flying from one of the gates of the city very speedily towards him, who told him that they accompanied him in his journey though he did not see them; and that they had been at Jerusalem to carry news of his travels thither, and to relate the constancy and resolvedness of his mind in this purpose; and that they were sent back again not only to wait upon him, but to let him know that the Lord of the place did wait very passionately for his arrival, and would be exceeding glad in safety to receive him.

Into what an ecstacy he was cast by this relation, especially when he heard a little whispering noise (for it was no more)

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of the music and the melodious airs which those choristers of heaven make, it is altogether needless to tell you. His soul was almost allured out of his body by this sight, and was held in by so very small a thread, that two or three sharp thoughts more of that happy place would have cut in two that slender tie. He verily thought that this was Pisgah, and that he was gone up to die there. And when he saw that he must still live, yet he could not but say to his guide, Let us build us a tabernacle or two in this place; for it is good to be here until those winged ministers shall be at leisure to come and fetch us away to heaven. Surely, said he, it cannot be long before they do us that favour. Let us sit still a while, and see if our longing souls in the posture wherein they have been cannot invite them to give us satisfaction and transport us thither. But his director (to whom he ever used to hearken) told him that this was a thing which a man might rather fancy than desire; for it could not be permitted that they should sit always gazing there, neither was there any hopes of arriving at the desired place, unless by their own diligence in such things as God would have them employed they still endeavoured to creep nearer and nearer unto it. And methinks, added he, it should be sufficient to content you that the rest of your way carries the face of such pleasure, and promises so much ease and facility to you in your passage, as you will discern if it please you but a little to turn your eyes from your journey's end, to behold the path that leads you to it.

With that the young man's eyes began to fall a little from those lofty places whereon they had been fixed; and to cast themselves upon the ground which lay below under his feet, in which he was at present to make his abode. But he did not lose his pleasure by taking his eyes off from Jerusalem; for the road which lay thither appeared now so plain, so fair and smooth, so free from briars and thorns, and all that had molested and galled him before, that it proved the beginning of heaven to him. The earth he saw was every where loadened with so much plenty; that nothing troubled him but only that he could not see travellers enough to gather it. On every side of him there were so many beautiful flowers, that he could scarce tell whose invitation to accept, when they seemed to

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desire to be plucked by his hands. The very stones had lost the hardness and roughness of their nature; and did soften and smooth themselves when the feet of pilgrims came to oppress them. And all the way likewise was so quiet and still, that if a leaf wagged, it was by the sweet breath of those musicians which sat among the branches. One could not speak so much as a word, but an echo from the vault of heaven would repeat it; as if she had a great desire to learn, or was much in love with that language. Yea, all the mountains which they were still to climb, seemed of so easy ascent, that they differed nothing from the plain ground; and the very trees which grew upon them were so straight and tall, that they seemed to lift up themselves above the clouds, to beg the heavenly bodies that they would send their pure and unstained influences on them, before they had lost any thing of their innocence, and were defiled by their passage through our unwholesome air to the bosom of the earth. Many a mile one might pass through a forest of nothing but myrtles and laurels; under the shade of which a traveller might sweetly repose himself, and dream that he saw the crowns and garlands which were wreathing for him in Jerusalem. Every wood also (of which some stages wholly consisted) appeared like a goodly orchard; where an infinite variety of lovely fruit saluted them that passed through it. And though the courteous apples, with all the rest, seemed to bow themselves to kiss the pilgrim's hands; yet by their fragrancy one would judge that they were not of a mere terrestrial growth; but fed by some invisible roots above, from which they derived the refined nourishment of celestial juices. From the surplusage of which also it was (as one would be tempted to think) that the balm and all other aromatic liquors dropped; which had no other use in that place but to anoint the heads of them whom those trees overshadowed. In short, this way that he had now to pass was called by some poetical fancies, the laughter and smile of nature; by others, a monopoly of pleasure; by others, a world of sweets that live in fair community together, neither envying nor contemning one the other, but contributing every one to the beauty and delight of the whole. But none of these names gave him any satisfaction, nor could it please him to hear it called any thing else than the Entrance of the

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Paradise above. And indeed, when he came to taste of the fruit, he could not but conclude that he eat of the *tree of life in the midst of the garden of God;* and when he felt those distillations on his head, he could think of nothing else but the *unction from above.* All the things in this description were but so many pictures, whereby his fancy represented to him the happiness of that life which hereafter he hoped to lead; wherein he thought to find every thing to his desire. The difficulties of his journey seemed now to be overcome; and every step he saw would bring him to a new pleasure. There was nothing to be done, but what promised to gratify him with repeated joys, and to reward his labours with abundance of content in the doing of it. And there was nothing to be suffered which threatened any harm; but seemed to have lost its prickles and thorns, and to court men into its embraces. Now he thought he should be so happy as to live more above, and hold a constant communication with Heaven. He expected to surmount the clouds wherein he had been wrapped, and to live in a purer light, and enjoy a greater serenity of mind. Now he hoped to pass his time in sublimer meditations; in a steadier faith; in a more ardent love; in more comfortable expectations; in quicker tastes of the good things to come; and so in more perfect peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. In short, he discovered on all sides both present satisfactions and future hopes; with larger assurances also that they would not make him ashamed.

Being thus then spurred by the admonitions of his friend, and the invitations of the way, on he went again (together with the happy companion of his travels), sometimes casting his eye upon Jerusalem, and sometimes upon his way, which now became more easy and more delightful to him than ever before. But having descended a little from the head of that lofty hill where they had stayed thus long, the young pilgrim observed that he had lost that fair sight of Jerusalem which he so much admired. At which he began to be surprised, with a little quivering and coldness in his body; till his old comforter told him that this ought to be the cause of no troublesome thoughts. For the whole way (said he) to that place consists much of hills and dales; and as now you are going down from the heights wherein you have been, so shall you advance again in

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due time, and be presented not only with a fresh, but with a fairer sight of it. He told him also how impossible it was for any traveller to remain long upon those mountains, where the air is so quick and piercing that it would make them quit their earthly mansions. And withal he discoursed of the advantage of those valleys, and showed him the silver brooks full of the waters of life, which ran in those humble places: together with all the pretty flowers wherewith the verdant banks of those streams were crowned. In fine, he represented to him that they were so far from descending now into any dismal shades, that they were but going to ease their minds with a little variety in these cool levels, which were almost spent and exhaled by so long a sight of Jerusalem in those superior regions. Not omitting also to let him know that it was not so impossible as he imagined, to meet with something of it in those low meadows into which they were now entering; which spread so goodly a carpet for their feet to tread upon, that the hill which they had left seemed to bow its head to look upon the richness of it. And thereupon he showed him how those crystal waters which he heard murmuring, and inviting his thirst to quench itself in their streams, came down from a spring on the brow of that mountain where they had lately been. And can you believe, said he, that any thing can flow from thence which brings no tidings with it from Jerusalem? Taste and see if their relish be not such as tells you from whence they come, and makes this place happy which flows with such contentment. Believe not me but yourself (if it be not too much for you to stoop down and drink) that these valleys are watered from above, and receive at second-hand what the more rising ground at first enjoys.

The young man heard him very obediently, and soon satisfied himself in the truth of what he said, by tasting of the waters, which had a strong tincture of Jerusalem. For the rays that come from it and beat continually upon that aspiring hill, had endued the whole body of it with some of their virtue, which might constantly be communicated to the neighbouring, though lower places. He was immediately inspired (I mean) with a great heat of divine love, in which he found not a litttle of heaven. He saw that meditation, prayer, and such-like holy

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employments do but dispose the will to acts of charity, and doing good to all, according as God hath done to us. The clearer sight he perceived that any one hath of the glory to come, the more powerfully is his heart touched with a fervent desire and endeavour to be thus employed. This is the natural issue of a right belief of what Christ hath promised. There is nothing so naturally flows from it when raised to its highest pitch, as an easiness and pleasure in doing good: than which nothing can come nearer to the life of them that dwell above. He saw now that Jerusalem might be found in the houses of the sick, in hospitals, and the meanest places where humility and charity can find themselves any work. If he met with a poor stranger that moved his compassion, it was as if he had met with an angel. If any differences came in his way which he could compose, it was as if Jesus had spoken peace unto him. When the orphans and widows gave him their blessing, it was as if he had received one from heaven. And all this gave him the greater satisfaction, because he was afraid he should have met with it nowhere else, save only on such mountains as they had newly left.

But yet I must not forget to tell you that there was none for whom he felt such a particular kindness, as this person who had so charitably conducted him and made every condition so pleasing to him. He had no sooner drunk off one cup of the waters named, and began some actions of charity to others, but he felt himself all over in a flame of love to him. Whatsoever he did, the end of it still was to think how much he was beholden to his love, which had directed him to this most happy life of doing good. One would have thought by the effects that it had been such a potion as they call a *philtrum*, which hath a power, it is said, to fascinate souls, and draw them by a sweet enchantment to that party who administers it to them. And, to tell you the very truth, had not the wisdom of his friend again prevented it, this had proved one of the sorest temptations which he had hitherto encountered; notwithstanding all the good counsel wherewith he had been armed. For as he was wont to report of himself, his heart was so much glued to this friend of his, that sometimes he could not think of Jesus or Jerusalem merely for thinking of him. He thought

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it was very sad that any one should be too greedy of so innocent a pleasure; but yet he fancied sometimes that he was, and that nothing else pleased him but only the society of this person.

Who now, therefore, thought himself concerned to have a more than ordinary care of his patient, because he had made him sick, or at least been an occasion of his present disease. And so quick he was in his applications, that it could scarce be called by that name; but by the virtue of his remedies was rather turned into a cure of other distempers, which had some root within him. It is not strange (said the old man) that I should creep so far into your heart, if you do but consider how wide we open our breasts to those things which are of great use and advantage to us. There was no other cause but this that made men deify certain creatures, which they found to be very high benefactors unto them. Have you never heard any body call the sun a visible god? And what was it, I beseech you, that procured him so many adorers, but the sense that men had of the benefit of his fires, which enamoured them of his beauty, and inflamed their love to the height of devotion to him? Wonder not, then, at yourself, that you perceive such a fervour in your soul to me, your poor friend, whom you esteem (though, alas! unworthy of such a name!) to be no less than your treasure. This will justify an high degree of affection towards me; and there is no danger, I'll warrant you, of proving an idolatrous lover, if you will but let me show you how easily you may make me become what you call me, and improve this affection so as to be a very great gainer by it. But first I must reveal to you this secret, which you have not hitherto discovered; that of this affection I myself have a larger share than yet hath appeared; yea, to your own person I have not been so cold as you may perhaps imagine. And yet I am so far from thinking myself the worse for what I feel of it, that I take myself to be much the better, and would not for all the world have a less portion of it than I perceive you find in your own heart.

Now, that you may not think I make use of rhetorical figures, and launch out a great deal beyond the truth, let me beg so much of your patience (who, as you confess, have em-

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ployed much of mine,) till I relate what benefit I have found by loving you. For then I hope you will think it possible for yourself to reap the same, and not be troubled for the excess of love you bear to me; since thereby you receive no greater hurt than to become capable of enjoying a more exceeding advantage. And God being the chiefest good, the highest object of our understandings, the satisfaction of our wills, the centre of all rational desires; what greater commendation can there be of friendship than that it is apt to bring our souls into a fuller possession of this Being, who is the cause of all other, and of all happiness? Will you not confess that it is a thing of great use and great value, which shall endear him unto you who is of more use and worth than the sun or all the world? Now if you can give any credit to me, you may be assured that my friendship with you hath taught me not only that God is love, but what it is to love God, better than any thing else perhaps could have done. And what is this love, but, as you have often heard, the whole duty of man; all that God requires of us, that we may enjoy eternal felicity with him? This if I can demonstrate, I suppose you will no longer complain of an excess of this excellent affection, which may so easily be converted, without much art or contrivance, into one so divine, that God himself will love it very much.

And if you would know by what chemistry it was that I turned this baser affection (as you are apt to call it) into that which is so noble and sublime, it will be a matter of no difficulty to make you understand it; for there was no longer operation in it than this. I used to observe what it was that my love caused me to do to you, and that I concluded was far more due to God. And so it taught me (1) to think often of him and to keep him in mind; for this I found a necessary effect of the friendship I have with you. If there be something in your idea that is grateful to me, which makes me to hug it so much and carry it about with me, then there must needs be a great deal more in that idea I have of God, who ought therefore ever to bear me company, and to go along with me as my joy, wherever it be that my occasions lead me. And so (2) I learnt by loving you to take a delight in conversing with him, and to embrace or rather seek all opportu-

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nities of frequenting his company. And then (3) (for I must not stay to enlarge these things into long discourses, but leave that for your work) I was instructed hereby to desire his acquaintance more, to thirst after an intimate familiarity with him, and to be more perfectly united to him. (4) To be highly pleased also in him was another fruit of this amity; to rest so satisfied in his enjoyment as to want nothing to complete my contentment. And (5) to study withal how to be pleasing to him; or rather, to be able without any study, by a mere likeness of nature, to do all things agreeably to his mind. For I must take so much liberty by the way as to tell you that there is no anxious labour in love, nor any carefulness to find what is grateful to our beloved; but we have a natural inclination to do just as they would have us. From hence (6) I proceeded to like well of whatsoever he doth, and to be pleased with all his providences; for we always feel ourselves inclined to find no fault with our friends, to interpret every thing to the best sense, and rather to excuse that which is ill, than think that they can do it. And (7) to receive all his kindnesses with a singularly great gratitude, as proceeding only from the goodness of his own nature, and not from any desert of mine. (8) To keep in memory also his benefits, and to think of them as I would of the tokens of your love, which I could not but look upon when I did not see you. And (9) as for the holy word, (which one of the ancient guides used to call the epistle of God to man,) I cannot but read it as I do your letters, with a great deal of pleasure and transport. And (10) likewise I read it over and over again, as I am wont to do your letters; not being content with a single pleasure, not thinking that I can espy all your affection at once that breathes there. And (11) do you think that I can live and not long to hear from him, or that I can be so patient as not to desire to see him? No, I am ever saying as the holy Psalmist, *O when wilt thou come unto me*[a]*?* You have taught me to contrive always that I may enjoy him, and to think myself more happy in it than all the world can make me. And (12) then I cannot but contrive how I may most serve him, and be glad of any occasion which is offered of so doing. For you may be confident I should suspect my love, if it did not excite me to render you

[a] [Ps. ci. 2.]

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all the services that are in my power, and make me study to be able to do that which is now out of the compass of it. And (13) another thing for which I stand indebted to your love is, that I am taught thereby to be very tender of his honour, and to be troubled that anybody should speak evil of him, or do any thing against him. Nay, (14) since you have given me leave to love you, I find that I am desirous that everybody should love him that is so amiable in my eyes; just as I wish that you may be acceptable to all, and never meet with any unkindness. (15) I have learnt also to consult and advise with him upon all occasions, and to open, as it were, my very heart to him. (16) And then to be confident of his help, and to expect undoubtedly to receive it, whensoever I have occasion for it. To which (17) if I should not add that I have learnt never to be weary of his company, but still to make a fresh delight in it, I should much forget myself, for that it is a most sensible effect of your friendship. And (18) so is this; to be loath to part with it, and to hold him so fast as not to be willing to let him go. As also (19) to be impatient of his absence, at least not to be so well any where else as I am with him. And (20) in fine, to long ever to be with him, and to be put into such a condition, that I may never have the trouble of parting with his company, which, alas! in this world I am forced too oft to suffer. And you need not wonder that I have learnt this last lesson by our friendship, for if you and I could now leave these pleasant plains wherein we are, and strip ourselves of this flesh; I for my part would willingly consent unto it, if I had assurance but of this happiness, that I should take you by the hand, and we should wander up and down in the air together.

I had almost forgot to tell you another happy fruit of this passion, and that is, when I desire any thing of him, to leave it to his choice and disposition; knowing that his wise love will do that for me which is most requisite and conducing to my welfare. Nay, more than this, I feel such an inclination to you, that I cannot but be ashamed if I am not carried with such a natural affection unto God. I did not beg of my will to love you; for I was surprised at first sight with that affection, and felt such a propension to you as the iron doth to the loadstone, which cannot choose but be ravished and attracted by it.

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From which you may be confident that now it is out of my power to forbear to love you; and that it is not a business to be referred to choice, but which nature commands, which will not be disobeyed or controlled. But then, methinks, my soul cannot be so dull (finding itself thus disposed to you) as to stay to ask itself a reason why it should love God, or whether it will love or no. I am forced to love him, and carried to him by such a strong inclination, as hath no cause but only nature. At least, this state I am reaching after; and it seems very unhandsome that I should be ever telling myself that there is this and that cause why I should love God: for I would be so impressed by him, that out of an innate tendency of mind I might run to him, or rather might still be with him, and have him continually before mine eyes. I have heard it, I remember, affirmed by some, that this love of inclination comes only from a reminiscence, or calling to mind such things as have been before. Such souls, say they, have been acquainted in some other world; and they do not now commence a new love, but only continue an old. And truly, if I might judge of the truth of what they say by the love I find to God, methinks they are not without the countenance of some reason. For my soul seems but to renew an ancient acquaintance with him. My love to him is so natural and easy, that it is just as if once we knew one another before. It doth not seem to be the birth of an affection which was not, but only the awakening of that which lay asleep. For there are no pangs, no difficulty in bringing forth this love; but we open our eyes, and see that glorious object which our souls would have, and cannot but fasten themselves upon.

And if I should add an heap of observations to these of another sort, and show you how hereby we come to be persuaded of God's love to us, and to have such high thoughts of it as to believe he is ready to grant us any thing that we ask; to pass by our faults, to come and visit us, to send his servants the angels to see us and wait upon us, &c., and all because he is our friend; you would see a further use of this divine affection, and be convinced that we cannot but live uncomfortably without it. And, indeed, if any one should think that it is put into our souls for so poor an end as to tickle us with a little plea-

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sure in civil conversation, and to help us to pass away the time more merrily, without any regard to these heavenly uses, it would be as absurd a conceit as to imagine the sun was made for no other purpose but to colour the cheeks of our apples, and enlarge the sphere of our cabbages. No, nature will not let us depress so far this darling of her's, to which she is inclined above all other things. That must needs be implanted by the hand of God to which all men have a propensity; and since it is very strong, overweighing all other inclinations, we must needs think that it was planted in them to do them some great benefit, and to be the instrument, above all other things, of their happiness. Now what is there to which we have a more inbred inclination, than to love and to desire to be beloved? There is no man but hates to be alone, and can as little endure to be with those for whom he hath no love; for still he is alone, if that be not there. A crowd is not company (as a wise man says); and faces are but a gallery of pictures; and talk but a tinkling cymbal, where there is no love. Nay, so natural is this to us (and withal so sweet), that I believe there is no man in the world who, for all the wealth in it, would be bound to love nobody, and to be beloved of none.

He was going on to some further discourses on this subject, when the other cried out, Hold, do not wholly impoverish this argument, but leave something for me to say, who am abundantly satisfied that there is nothing comparable to this which hath been the cause of my trouble. I will never blame myself more for exceeding too much in this sort of love. I plainly see that mediocrity, which every where else is counted a virtue, doth here become a vice. I am more than converted by your excellent discourse. I must turn proselyte to him who said "that he would have the affection of friends appear rather a passion than a virtue: that friendship hath nothing more excellent in it than excess; and that it doth rather offend in the moderation than in its violence and extremity." And here he began to invent all the praises he could of friendship, which he called the top and perfection of love; the soul of the world; the spirit of nature; the bond of society; the marriage and happy union of agreeing minds; the life and joy of mankind; the relief of our sorrows; the physician of all our secret griefs;

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our buckler in all assaults; our oracle in our doubts; the governor and tutor of a prosperous condition; the comforter of a declining fortune; without which the greatest happiness would be irksome to us, and in whose company the greatest affliction cannot make us miserable. He reflected also very happily on this; that it was one of the last things that Jesus himself did in this world, to make a friendship between two great persons, his blessed mother and his beloved disciple. These, he remembered, our Lord would have to live together like mother and son; which he thought imported such a dearness between them as would justify the height of his affection. And then he cried out, Thou, O divine love, art the nature of God, the life of angels, the employment of heaven! By knowing thee I know what it is that I owe to God; and I now also know Jerusalem better, where they exercise the noblest friendships. I will never fear thee any more; for I see thou wilt secure my duty to God; and it will be strange if my neighbours be not better for thee, who art always instigating me to do good. What though I be chained more to one person than another? you need not think, O sons of men, that I shall thereby become less charitable to you: for my love finding here a continual employment, and constant exercise for itself, I am the more disposed and ready, when occasion serves, to express it to you all. My retirements cannot work its decay; but in the greatest privacy this friendship keeps any rust from growing over it, and preserves it pure and bright for the use of others too. I love you all, wheresoever you dwell on the face of the whole earth. I stretch out my hands to you from one pole to the other, wishing I could do you good: and though I cannot reach you every one, yet my love gives me the comfort of this assurance, that God is with you; who, as he hath a greater love, so a greater ability to help you all.

But his guide, who was better acquainted with his duty than himself, thought it best to bring him out of this rapture; because he saw that he would immerse himself too far in the pleasure of this contemplation; and likewise thought it was not safe to gratify themselves with too much of this honey at once. He prayed him therefore to lay aside this discourse a while, and to divert himself with the observation of some of

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those flowers and plants wherewith they saw the earth strewed as they went along. For sure, said he, these were not made for us to tread upon, nor only to feed our eyes with their grateful variety, or to bring a sweet odour to our noses; but there is a more internal beauty in them for our minds to prey upon, did we but let them penetrate beyond the surface of these things into their hidden properties. You are a Christian, it is confessed, but doth that make you cease to be a man? You read the gospel of our Saviour, but must that give a discharge to all our rational inquiries into the book of nature? Doth the new creation intend to destroy the old? or because we behold God in the face of Christ, must we look upon him nowhere else? No such matter; there is a more ancient obligation upon you to study the works of God, of which you ought to quit yourself while you study his word. It is an honour to the school of Christ when his disciples are skilled in all wisdom. He is such a Master as would not have us know other things the less, but the more, by knowing him. And so they began to pry into many curiosities which several of the creatures they met withal presented to them; not without a great astonishment at that infinite understanding that was the Contriver of them. And having once tasted of this kind of learning, he often wished that it was in his power to understand more of his own body, of the motions of the sun, moon, and other stars, with many things besides in this great fabric, wherein he knew God had hid great treasures of wisdom, and engraven a fair image of himself. Yea, he conceived the whole world sometimes a great temple, and himself one of the priests that God had placed therein to offer up the praises of all the creatures, and acknowledge his wisdom, his power, his goodness, which are conspicuous in the frame of them. And though he could acquire but a very small knowledge of some of them, yet it was a great pleasure to see that there were many more intelligent priests than himself, and more acquainted with Nature's mysteries, who rendered to God continually better praises, and called upon *all his works in all places of his dominion*[q] to bless his holy name.

[q] [Psalm ciii. 22.]

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CHAP. XXXVII.

How after this the pilgrim fell into a conceit that he did not profit in virtue; and how his guide rid him of it. That we must not make too much haste to perfection, but go leisurely in our way. How afterwards he feared that he should never hold out to the end of his journey. Of the confident zeal which some men are possessed withal. A beginning of a new discourse about faith.

And now would you think, after he had gone thus far, that he should be troubled with such an odd fancy as this, that he did not profit at all in virtue? Yet so it was, that one day he seriously told his friend he could not perceive that he had done any thing worthy of himself, or made any proficiency in the school of piety wherein with so much care he had been bred.

No? said his companion, nothing at all? That is very strange indeed, and you must pardon me if I tell you that it is a melancholy conceit. For have you overcome so many temptations, and yet done nothing? Do you love God and your neighbour so much as to have an infinite desire of doing good, and yet not at all bettered? Have you suffered such a long martyrdom, and yet been lazy and idle? Have you had so many sights of Jerusalem, and yet made no progress in your journey? Was not the last prospect which you gained of that place fairer than the former, and did it not seem nearer and closer to you? How should that come about, if you had stood still, and not gone forward towards it? Away with these black thoughts, which the fumes of melancholy, and nothing else, do breathe into you. For my part, I think you have profited so much, that I please myself to look upon you no less than a gardener doth to behold the trees which he planted, when they bring forth fruit, or a father rejoices to see the children of his cares grown up to the stature of men and women. I desire only that you would cherish an honest emulation of yourself, and cast a jealous eye on your own worth, lest you should not be so good as yourself. Do but labour not to come behind nor fall short of your own virtue; do but keep up close to your own example; and I shall think you such a proficient, that I shall glory in the name of your instructor. But, for the pre-

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sent, come along with me, and let us refresh ourselves a little in yonder fair bowling-green, that we may excite those natural spirits which, I see, are heavily oppressed by that grim enemy I just now named of all pious souls; and you shall soon see better thoughts in your soul, when you have better blood in your body.

With much ado he persuaded him to consent to this motion, and though thereby he received some relief, yet the same dejected humour too much continued. For his mind being strongly impressed with those conceits, they could not so soon be discharged and blotted out. Besides the continuance therefore of that exercise, and the use of some physic, he thought good at seasonable times more particularly to remember all that the gracious God had done for him: bidding him to take great heed, lest under the guise of his humility (as it is esteemed) he proved unthankful for his favours; and by studying to depress himself, he withal depressed the bounty of his goodness. He let him know also that the perfection which he aimed at (the want whereof might possibly be the root of this new trouble) was not to be attained by such violent, passionate, and impetuous motions, but by leisurely, quiet and silent steps unto it. Did you mind, said he, the flowers as we passed along, how some were hidden in their green cups, others were half born, and the rest newly disclosed? Or have you never marked the rose, how it swells into small knobs or buttons? which, when they are full grown, do rive by little and little, until they have discovered all their treasures? Suppose you should unbutton it as soon as it swells, or go about suddenly to rip it up when it is opening itself, would you not endanger the spoiling of its beauties, and deprive yourself of that wholly which you desire too soon to enjoy? Your own case is nothing different; and if you will not be content to grow leisurely, you may miss of the happiness at which you would so speedily arrive. You must not make so much haste, as I have often told you. You must give yourself leave to ripen, and allow a fair time for your proceeding to perfection. And in the mean season, be not so unreasonable as to think you have nothing, because you have not all that is in your desires. It may seem strange perhaps at first sight, but it is certainly true, that the desire of much virtue may prove inordi-

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nate. Though you may think that it can never be too passionately pursued, yet assure yourself, your desires are undue, when such an affliction of spirit attends upon them as is wont to accompany the desire of other things. If the violence and fierceness of them rend your heart, there may be as much hazard in it as there is in tearing up a rose when it is in labour to bring forth its leaves. That is, you will never be so good as otherways you might; nor obtain so much by your own eagerness, as would come of itself in a course of nature. I do not intend to quench your zeal, nor is all this said to make you less fervent in your study to become more pious; or to move you to leave all to God's will without your own industry. But my meaning is, that just as you take order in your worldly affairs, so should you manage yourself in those of your soul. We must be diligent in the pursuit of such things as are needful for our bodies; yet we ought not to afflict ourselves with the anguish of cares and fears, and such like passions; but quietly put the issue of our labours into God's hands, and patiently expect what he will bless them withal. Even so must you bestir yourself with as much industry as you can for the good of your soul; yet with this condition, that if you cannot acquire all that you would, you do not suffer your heart to fall into a fit of impatience, vexation, and fretting at your present estate, which must needs be joined with a great distrust of God. By this means, while you would avoid one fault, you run into another. And you keep yourself with such violent hands from compassing your desires, that you seek for perfection by the means of the greatest imperfection, and would redress your disorders by constantly living in them. You must thank God therefore for what he gives, and patiently wait upon him for more when he pleases to bestow it. And I am apt to think that humility and patience in the company of our imperfections, when we do our best endeavour to outgrow them, is as acceptable to God as the nobler improvements of others that complain of no such imperfections. For the one is the gift of God as well as the other; and he that gives them to be without such defects, gives you grace to bear them merely when they cannot be helped.

I would have you, my friend, not to cease to follow the bravest examples; and when you cannot be master of all you

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desire, yet still to continue your desire. But be not disgusted at yourself, I beseech you, that you are in a state of desire, and not of perfect enjoyment. Let not this take away your peace, that you are not in the foremost ranks of those that are marching to Jerusalem. Be not cast down and sorely afflicted within yourself that you do not advance so fast as you would. Do not follow your Saviour with a sour heart, dejected looks, and fallen wings; as many are wont to do, who perpetually lament their faults, and cannot yet amend them. But render him most humble thanks that he hath given you the knowledge of them, and an earnest longing to be without them, and a study to shake them off, together with good hopes that they may be cured; or that, as some go to heaven in the height of virtue, so others may accompany them with as much as they could possibly attain. All have not the same temper, the same diversions, nor the same businesses in the world; and therefore be content with that degree which your condition will permit you to rise unto, and resolve not to vex yourself unreasonably about that which is not in your power to remedy. You have often heard, I believe, that there is no peace to be had here but by patience. And in my opinion he said true, who told one of his disciples, that it is no patience, when a man is content to bear with his neighbour, if withal he be not content to bear with himself. Not to the end (as I told you) that he should indulge himself in idleness, and not strive to grow better; but that all the pains he takes to be so should not end in sorer pains and greater torments because he is yet no better.

Many other things he added to the same effect; and at last prayed him, that if he was fallen into such a dislike of himself as to be weary of long discourses, as well as of his condition, yet at least he would observe these three things, not unworthy of his notice, though they were the advice of heathens. Hecaton had this saying: "Askest thou wherein I have profited? I have begun to be a friend to myself[r]." Such a man hath gotten very much. He will never be alone, but always hath a good companion with him. And he that is a friend to himself will not fail to be a friend to everybody else. I believe you cannot

[r] ["Quæris, inquit, quid profecerim? Amicus esse mihi cœpi."—Sen. Epist. vi. ad fin.]

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deny that you might have made this answer to the same question. You have begun to take a great care of your soul. Nay, you have a long time made it your business to do it good. And if you ask other men, they will tell you that you are a friend to them, and have done them also a great deal of good. How came you to grow into this familiarity with your soul? What made you to let it have so much of your company? Sure it is a sign of some proficiency that you are so well acquainted with it. And this brings to my mind another mark of your increase in virtue, which is visible even in your complaints. "It is an argument," saith Seneca[s], "of a mind that is changed for the better, when it is acquainted with those faults which it was ignorant of before." To which I may add a third. Do you not will and nill alway the same things? Are not those things the matter of your choice to day, which yesterday you desired? "This is a testimony of your profiting, to be constant to yourself." And therefore take heed, I beseech you, of this sour loathing of yourself; for in time it will breed a dislike of your duty too, and spoil your appetite to any thing that is good. While you are inordinately troubled that you cannot do as you would, you will not do what you can. And in a multitude of confused desires after a better condition, you will waste the time which ought to be spent in doing your best in your present estate.

With these good counsels, and other remedies too long to be related, he recovered the poor man to a better state of health, and brought him to conceive a better opinion of himself. And yet his health was not so confirmed, but that afterward he fell into a little distemper, and languished under a new trouble; very near of kin to this, and which it brings to my mind. It was a great despondency, arising from the observation of some weaknesses he felt in his soul, which bred in him a diffidence and distrust of his own constancy; and a fear that he should never hold out in his journey, but at last sit down short of Jerusalem. This made him exceeding pensive, and to go drooping a great while; because he thought that every mile would prove his last, or at least that he should never be able to travel

[s] ["Hoc ipsum argumentum est in melius translati animi, quod vitia sua quæ adhuc ignorabat videt."—Sen. Epist. vi.]

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so long till he had finished his course. Which jealousy discovering itself by some means or other unto his friend, (though he did what he could to conceal it,) he was moved with a great deal of pity towards him; and beseeched him earnestly not to let every suspicion of himself which started up in his soul make such a deep impression there, before he had advised whether there were cause to entertain it or no. For if you had asked me about this matter as soon as you moved the doubt, I could soon have made you give yourself satisfaction, and laid such a scene of new thoughts in your mind, that you should have remembered the former no more. For tell me, I pray you, who brought you thus far in this long journey wherein you are engaged? Was it yourself, or was it somebody else? If it was yourself, you know upon what reasons it was begun; and if they were worth any thing, they may make you to go on. And it should seem also that you have more strength than you imagine, if you have travelled so many leagues, without any support, upon your own legs. But I perceive you so ill opinionated of yourself, that you are inclined by that, if there were no other reason, to ascribe your happy progress to some higher cause. Thither let us go then; and ask of God, if he uses to forsake the work of his own hands, and to lose all that he hath done already, for want of doing a little more. Will he now forsake you, after you have served him so many years? Will he disown one that hath been so long a client to him, and still seeks for his wonted protection? Doth he love his friends no better than to shake them off when they grow old? If I would at all have suspected his constancy, it should have been in the beginning of our acquaintance, and not now that he hath been tried for half an age. Was there any reason at first why he should bear a good will to you, or was there none? If there was none, then there needs none to move him now to continue his love. If there was any, then there is a greater reason now; because he hath loved you so long, and you are also more worthy his love. Do him the honour then that you would do a friend, to believe that he is not fickle and inconstant. Or do but justice to him, and think that he is not unfaithful, but true to his word. And then as long as your Lord lives, you shall live also. And he that hath begun a good work in you will perfect it, no doubt, till he come to give you his rewards.

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I know you will tell me that you do not question his faithfulness and steadfastness to his friends; but you have been unkind to him, and so have forfeited his good esteem and love. And let it be so, since it is your pleasure, that you have not behaved yourself so gratefully as you ought: but is he of such a disposition, that he can never be won to a reconciliation? I pray, have a care what you say, for fear you make good men better than God; who are wont to forgive their brother when he repents, not only seven times, but seventy times seven. And say, I beseech you, hath he not pardoned you heretofore very lovingly when you humbly and obediently entreated him to pass by your offences? When you were one of the world, did he not then draw you to himself without your desire, and overmatched your sins by his infinite, omnipotent goodness? What should hinder then his kindness and clemency towards you now that you are become a man separate from the world? If the mire and dirt wherein we wallowed could not hinder but he would needs take us in his arms, and place us in his bosom; will he shake us off, and throw us out from thence, now that we are washed and made clean? Will he not rather wipe off a speck of dirt that hath lit upon us than cast us down into the mire again? Can you think that he who took in strangers to his house, and gave them kind entertainment, will turn his children out of doors? After we have done him so many services, and laboured for his love, will he thrust us out in an heat of anger, and quite cashier us his family? O absurd suspicion! A jealousy unworthy of such an excellent Father, and unbecoming sons that have so nobly and tenderly been brought up by him. If you were to treat with a person like yourself, you must first think him very bad, or else you would not be so injurious as to harbour such thoughts of him. You must judge him very froward who will fall out with you upon every slight occasion, and never return with you into grace any more. Do not impute then a thing so unnatural unto God; nor so much wrong his infinite goodness as to take him to be of so harsh a disposition, that we must never expect his favour more if we chance but to offend him. No, if we can but believe that he loves himself, you need not fear that he should thus abandon you. You have cost him too much, that he should so easily part with you. He hath bought you at so excessive a rate, that you may be assured

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he will not willingly lose you. The breeding of you hath stood him in so much care, that he will not spare a little more to keep you.

And if you are thus secure of God's love, I pray, tell me what you think should separate you from him? Can you really think that you yourself shall have a mind to leave him, and return back to the world from whence you came? You cannot, I am confident, remain two minutes in this persuasion, if you be not forsaken of your reason, and left to the impostures of fancy and wild imagination. For what is that can dissolve that league of friendship that is so solemnly and religiously sworn betwixt you? Is there any thing in him that can disgust you and make him seem less amiable in your eyes? Can you fear that his conversation may grow tedious, and prove a burden to you in the conclusion? or what prejudice can you receive by loving of him, seeing you believe that all good is in him, and that he calls us to his own kingdom and glory? I am verily persuaded you think that you cannot cease to love me, to whom you profess yourself so much beholden. And yet what am I in compare with him? or what obligations have you received from me that can be so strong to hold you as those that he hath laid upon you? I may change, and not be so good as I am, or not so full of love to you. Some damage may appear that you may be in danger to receive by loving me, which I can never be able to repair. But there is not so much as a shadow of turning in him: he is always the same fulness and the same love, infinitely desirous of our happiness. And as for any loss that we may possibly sustain for his sake, it cannot be so great but he can make us a recompense for it incomparably greater. Do not hold yourself then in such suspicion, unless you can think that you have taken a wrong measure of him; especially since you are of opinion that you cannot but love me to the end; and also have so lately told me that you were satisfied the love of me would teach you to love God the better.

I should proceed to remember you also that the ways of virtue which you have to tread are so pleasant, that you will not be inclined to relinquish them, and divert into any other path:

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and that you can never think fit so to disparage this noble life as to leave it after you have made a very long trial of it: and that you will not endure to retreat with so much shame as you will necessarily draw upon yourself, by abandoning a course which you have so highly commended: all this I say, and much more I should call to your mind, but that you seem to discharge me of that trouble by the cheerfulness which I observe to return into your countenance. I see that you begin to believe that you shall persevere, and that you recover your ancient comfort; that *stronger is he who dwelleth in you than he who dwelleth in the world*[a]. The devil begins already to fly from you; and, by the light of these truths, we have chased away the cloud that hung over you. Carry them therefore, I entreat you, ever in your mind; and let me hear no more of these dejections of spirit, which are as unreasonable as they are uncomfortable both to yourself and others. I will say no more of this matter after I have told you a story of an ancient pilgrim in the way to Jerusalem; to which therefore you had best attend. It is St. Peter I mean, who, you know, had a mind to walk with our Saviour upon the water; which was no easy thing to do: and yet by the power of his Master was endued with such a virtue as to tread safely upon that yielding element. He went a pretty way while the face of the water was smooth and even, and it seemed nothing different from the solid earth. Until the wind began to be loud, and the plain way upon the water was turned into hills and dales, we hear of no shrieks; but then he cried out, and his heart and his feet began to sink together. But was there any reason to fear drowning after he had walked half a furlong? or to imagine it would not bear him up the next half as well as it had done the former? none at all, sure. The winds that blew, and the rough waves that began to lift up themselves, were no less subject to that power which upheld him than the smooth and quiet surface of the sea. It was as easy to walk upon a billow as upon the still water. The blustering wind had no more power there than the silent air. Whence then proceedeth this change, that the man who lately trampled upon the sea, and gloried over the deep, doth now feel himself slip into the bosom of it, and is in danger to be swallowed up by it? The

[a] [See 1 John iv. 4.]

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firm ground which he thought was under him is gone, and he is left to the mercy of the angry waves. Was not the change within before his feet felt any? Did not a violent fear lay hold upon him? and did he not let go his hold of the hand which before sustained him? Yes, this was the business. If his faith had been as strong as once it was, his condition had been as safe in the midst of the storm as before it was in the calm. When this anchor broke the waters began to suck him in: they challenged him then for their proper goods, because his faith was in a manner already shipwrecked: but did his gracious Master so part with him? Would he lose a servant because he was weak, and wanted confidence in him? Or did he delay to help him, and only hold him up by the chin when all his body was in the deep? No; when he cried for relief, and beseeched to be saved, he instantly put forth his hand, caught hold of him, and rescued him from the jaws of death. He only chides him because he doubted; but neither lets him sink into the belly of waters, nor stays his succours till he was in greater need of them. He straightway lends him more power; and chooses rather to encourage a little faith than let him perish because he had no more.

Now this story, methinks, bears a great resemblance with that condition wherein you and many more besides have been. We have a great mind to go to Jesus, and for that end to walk here in the world as he walked. But it is very much that we, who are so earthly, and have such ponderous affections to things here below, should be able to tread them under our feet, and keep ourselves above the soft pleasures of the flesh, into which we are apt to sink. This seems no less a wonder than it was for a body of earth to walk upon the face of the sea, which uses to swallow down such heavy things that come into it. Whence is it, I pray, that we have this strength, and can lift up ourselves above our natural propensions to lead the life of God? Is it from our own virtue? or rather, must we not acknowledge that we receive it from that voice which saith to us, as unto that apostle of our Lord, *Come?* This, sure, is the cause to which it must be ascribed. And it cannot be of less efficacy afterward than it was at the first; but when he still saith, *Follow me,* he gives a greater power and force unto

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us so to do. But how comes it about, then, that you and others begin sometimes to sink, or at least to imagine that you are falling into the world, and that the sensual life will at last draw you into its embraces again? Truly, there is the same cause of it that there was in him, and that is diffidence. You forget yourself, and distrust God; and that works a decay of the virtue and ability that was in your heart. You regard more the winds and the waves, the difficulties and temptations that you are encompassed withal, than the power and the love of Jesus which attends upon you; and so you begin first to fear, and then to fall. Yet behold what a loving and kind Master you serve. He doth not take this so ill at your hands as to let you quite go, and fall still lower and lower into the water until you be drowned: but if you look earnestly upon him, and call to him, and entreat him to take pity upon you, and not to leave you, he gives you his hand presently, and sets you in safety. Though now you have been very distrustful of his goodness, and have fainted in your mind, as if he would not regard you; yet his tenderness is so great, that he bids me assure you he will not forsake you, nor fail to support and help your feeble soul. Only in his name I must a little chide you, and give you a gentle reproof in his own words, saying, *O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt*[b]*?* I say no more, because I see you are sorrowful, and hope you will give me no more the like trouble.

Indeed, replied the pilgrim; I deserve a more severe reprehension, and you deal too favourably with me when you give me so mild a rebuke. But I suppose you use me thus tenderly that I may be sensible of the gracious nature of our Lord, who hath compassion on our weakness, and is loath to discourage those by any sharpness of his, who are too apt to invent over many discouragements to themselves. And truly, I am so apprehensive of his lenity, and behold also so great a portion of it in yourself, that were it not upon that account, I should again be apt to stand in fear of creating not only you, but him, a greater trouble than you are able to bear. I am, you see, very foolish, always complaining and exercising your

[b] [Matt. xiv. 31.]

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patience. I have so many scruples and little fears, am so inconstant and wavering in my thoughts, so frequently sick and out of order, so forgetful also of your counsels, that perhaps by this time you begin to reflect and consider how great a burden you have drawn upon yourself by undertaking the charge of me. And, I pray, tell me sincerely whether you are not a little weary of me, and do not wish yourself rid of such an impediment, for I can scarce call myself your friend any longer, but your trouble, or your burden. Tell me, I say, is not this a fitter name for me than any else? And can you find in your heart to own that sweet relation to him any more, who hath made himself so unpleasing on all occasions, and nothing but disquieted your happy repose? I doubt if you could see my heart, and behold what a seed of new troubles and doubts lodges there, you would tell me plainly that you shall never enjoy yourself till you be divorced from me.

You surprise me strangely, said the good old man; and did I not consider that you have suspected the kindness of God himself, I should be so amazed at this alteration in you as to lose the use of words, and not know what to say to you. Little did I think that I should ever have had an occasion to answer such a question as that you propose, for sure you never discerned that I had a mind to be separated from you. And truly I never discerned any such thing in myself, nor have you given me cause to be less your friend than heretofore, unless it be by this unfriendly jealousy, which, as I told you a little while ago, I thought you would never have entertained. And since I see it proceeds rather from an ill opinion of yourself than any you have of me, I recall that word, and pray you to believe that you are as dear unto me as ever; that is, my friend. And what, I pray you, is the office of a friend, if not to relieve the wants of those he loves, and to bear those burdens with them which they are not able to carry alone? If they themselves therefore, by reason of any heaviness of spirit, prove the burden that he must sustain, he will not complain of it. It is their unhappiness, he knows, both that they are so heavy, and are in danger, they think, to be a load to him; and he will not let them be more unhappy by becoming heavy himself, and groaning under that easy weight which they lay

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upon him. Easy I call it, because it is a pleasure to do any kindness for our friends; and the pleasure increases proportionably to the pains that we take in doing of it. You shall hear the judgment of a philosopher in this case, if you please; and of one that loved ease more than any of his fellows. Though a wise man, he thought, might be content with himself; yet notwithstanding he granted that his happiness would be greater with a friend. Of such a companion he cannot but be desirous, if it be for no other end but to exercise his amity, and that so great a virtue may not remain without use. "He doth not choose a friend (saith Epicurus himself[c]) to have some to assist him when he is sick, or to succour him if he be in prison, or such necessities. But contrariwise, that he may have one whom he may help and comfort in the like distresses. For he hath an evil intention that only respects himself when he makes friendship. And so shall he end his friendship as he begun the same. He that hath purchased himself a friend to the intent that he may be succoured by him in prison; will take his flight as soon as he feels that he is released of his bonds. Both the chains shall be knocked off together, those of his prison and those of his friendship. These are the friendships which we vulgarly call temporary, being made only to serve a turn. He that is made a friend for profit sake, shall please as long as he may be profitable; and so they who are in felicity see themselves environed with a multitude of these followers; but where the distressed dwell, there is nothing but solitude. For such manner of friends always avoid those places where they may be proved. It is necessary that the beginning and the end have a correspondence. He that hath begun to be a friend because it is expedient, he that hath thought there is a gain in friendship beside itself, may well be suborned against the same by the appearance and offers of a greater gain. For what cause, then, do I entertain a friend? To the end I may have one for whom I may die, whom I may accompany in banishment, and for whose life and preservation I may expose myself to any danger. For the other, which only regards profit, and makes account of that which may turn to its own commodity, it is rather a traffic than friendship. Certain it is, that friendship hath in some sort a similitude and likeness to

[c] [Apud Sen. Epist. ix.]

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the affection of lovers; whose scope is neither gain, nor greatness, nor glory; but, despising all other considerations, love itself enkindles in them a desire of the beloved form, under hopes of a mutual and reciprocal amity." Thus he.

Unless you will number me, then, among those summer friends which he speaks of, or think that friendship in me is feebler than it was in pagans, you must not hold me any longer in suspicion. And indeed if you did but know how great a favour you do me in letting me know your griefs, and making me the witness of your conscience, and relying upon me for advice, and thereby giving me an opportunity to serve you the best I can; you would presently throw away all these imaginations, which the enemy of souls and of friendship would instil into you. For my part, I did not so lightly and in sport receive you into my conduct, as that any difficulty, or a multitude of them, should make my employment tedious to me. Nay, how can it be irksome, when you yourself acknowledge that the labours of love are all pleasure, and carry their own rewards in them. You may think perhaps that love grows old as well as all other things, and that time works its decay, and renders it feeble and weak. Thus Attalus was wont to say, that 'it is far more pleasant to make a friend than to have one[d]:' as it is more agreeable to a painter's fancy to draw his lines than to have finished the picture. After he hath painted, indeed, he possesses the fruit of his art, but he took pleasure in the art itself when he painted. Just as the youth of our children is more fruitful to us, but their infancy is more sweet. But assure yourself I do not live by any of these maxims. Friendship is like wine; the older it is the better. It grows more pure by age; its spirits are more disengaged, and it warms the heart more powerfully than when it was but new and green. Nay, your friendship is more pleasant too, whatsoever you may think, now that it is grown, than it was in its childhood. I enjoy the remembrance of those pleasures, and have some new ones besides; just as a painter thinks on his art when he beholds the piece that he hath brought to perfection. I beseech you, then, if you have any love to me, that you will not call in question mine to you. And if all this will

[d] [Apud Sen. ibid.]

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not satisfy you, let me entreat you, for the love of our Lord, that you will ask him whether I do not love you. I know he is so much a friend to truth, and unto love too, (not to say to you and me,) that he will do me the favour to persuade you that I do. And therefore let not the evil one, who loves nothing less than our friendship, sow this jealousy in your heart, that I grow weary of you. But be confident that as our Lord loves you, so he imparts true love to me; and that if the arms of these two can do any thing, you shall be carried safe to Jerusalem.

And now, since I have told you my very heart, let me know, I pray, what further doubt it is that troubles yours. It cannot be so great, sure, that I should not find a remedy for it: and you need not fear that it will procure me too great a trouble; since it is become, as you see, one of my chief pleasures to ease you of your troubles. It must be so, indeed, said the pilgrim, if you have any pleasure at all; for I live as if I had nothing else to do but to find some new occasion to perplex myself, that I may be disentangled by you. You think that I am advanced a great way toward Jerusalem; and truly I hope that I am gone further than I lately thought myself: but, alas! I am nothing so strong, so steady, much less so wise, as you seem sometimes to imagine. A little thing, you see, shakes me; and there are lesser matters, that you have not yet been privy to, that put my thoughts into confusion. The very puff of a confident man's breath doth endanger to make me reel; and though I understand myself very well in those things wherein you have instructed me, yet the mere zeal and earnestness wherewith some persons assault me, when there is no reason in what they say, is apt to make me suspect and distrust myself; nay, to fall into a trembling lest all should not be well with me. This, you will say, is a small matter, and not worthy to be called a trouble, (and truly I am glad and thank God for your sake that it is no more;) yet, when I give you an instance of it, you will think I had some cause to complain as I did, though not so much as my words, in the late passion wherein I was, might import. Your discourse of faith and confidence in God (for which I am obliged unto you) revived at first the memory of my weakness instead of giving me strength, and

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made me think with myself, Alas! I have made it a question whether I have any faith or no. For, to tell you the truth, I met lately with an acquaintance of mine (when you were absent about some business), who would needs persuade me that I was drawn away, and was no true believer, because I described faith unto him in that manner as you had taught me. I told him that I was heartily persuaded that Jesus was the Son of God; and that he had taught us all his will; and that he, having died for our sins, did by the same death confirm unto us *great and precious promises;* and that he lives and reigns in heaven for ever; and that he will give eternal life to all that obey him; and that hereupon I was become obedient to his voice, and, quitting all present enjoyments, was willing to follow him to the death. And yet, after all this, he miscalled my persuasion by a word which I think he did not understand, saying that I was endued only with an historical faith, which would not save me. I explained that word as well as I could, and told him that a belief of the history of the gospel, (of all that is related there,) when it produces obedience to the laws of it, was saving faith. But he smiled at my ignorance (as he esteemed it), and told me, that the faith which justifies, and so saves us, was only a recumbency on Christ, an application of his merits to my soul, with a number of such-like phrases, the obscurity or lameness or danger of which though I represented to him, yet would he not yield a jot, nor cease to importune me that I would take heed of the danger of unbelief. And indeed I, knowing him to be a good man himself; and he, affirming that all godly men of a long time had been of his mind, and using such confidence and vehemence in his words, and sometimes thundering also so terribly in my ears the danger wherein my soul was; I must confess, such was my weakness, that I trembled a little, though I knew no cause, and was afraid that I had been misled out of the company of so many believers as he told me of. This hath been a double trouble to me; sometimes to think that I should be afraid without reason; and sometimes suspecting that there may be reason in what he saith, and my eyes so blinded that I cannot see it. Now I have opened my heart to you very freely; and I pray be not angry that I should doubt either of your fidelity or of your ability in the instructions you long since gave me.

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There is no cause for this petition, said the good father; I am willing you should hear what everybody saith, for then you will see the difference. It is better a great deal that you should doubt, than that you should blindly resign up yourself to all my dictates. I am none of those that love to be believed because I say it; nor that raise the sound of my voice to gain an advantage of them whose modesty will not let them be so loud. I will leave that privilege to such men as are in need of it, having nothing else to serve them; to some of whom I doubt your acquaintance is made a proselyte. "For there are a company of men in the world (as hath been noted long since by a wise man[e]) who love the salutation of Rabbi, or Master; and that not in ceremony or compliment, but in an inward authority which they seek over men's minds; in drawing them to depend upon their opinions, and to look for knowledge only at their lips. It is not the lord bishops, (as he speaks,) but these men, that are the successors of Diotrephes, the great lovers of preeminence. They will be lords over men's faith, and overawe them into a belief of all that they preach. None may dissent from their assertions, unless he be content to bear the brand of an unbeliever. It is all one to forsake the gospel, and to forsake their opinions. You leave Christ if you leave them; and *the faith which was once delivered to the saints* is solely in their keeping. That which makes them the more usurp upon others is, that they have the hap to light upon such natures who readily receive that which is confidently spoken, and stiffly maintain that which once they have embraced. Such are men of younger years and superficial understandings, that are carried away with partial respect of persons, or with the enticing appearance of godly names and pretences: there being few (as he observes) who follow the things themselves more than the names of the things, and most the names of the masters. Nay, most do side themselves with these masters before they know their right hand from their left. And they skip from mere ignorance to a violent prejudice; from knowing nothing to an opinion that they know all things, or, at least, to a confidence that they are not mistaken in what they know. This strong prejudice is rarely overcome: for the honourable names of sincerity, singleness of heart,

[e] Lord Bacon. ["Of Church Controversies," Works, vol. vii. pp. 40, 42.]

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godliness, and the glory of free grace being put in the front, and marching before their doctrines, they can never be touched by those that have a mind to assault them, but those holy things will first be thought to suffer a violation." But as I intend to have nothing to do with these lords and masters, so I would have you to withdraw yourself from the thraldom of their subjects. I may well be allowed to bid you not to follow them, seeing I would not have you follow me without reason. Exempt yourself from the number of those that are sheepishly led whither confident men will have them; or that are hurried away with the blasts of a furious zeal; or that are wont to tell voices, and not to weigh them. If there be any thing that I am to accuse you of in this particular, it is only that which you have confessed; that you dare not (as I also noted heretofore) trust your own reason, and adhere to the clear and well-poised resolutions of your own mind, if anybody raise a clamour against them. There is a certain modesty in your soul which is very commendable, if it do not betray you into the hands of those that are so impudent as to outface you. It will do you service, if it only restrain you from their peremptoriness, (which you have as much right to use as themselves, if it were fit and decent;) but it ought not to make you yield to them, because they are so confident as to press for your consent with great earnestness, and without any reason. Time, I hope, will both embolden your modesty, and also settle your notions better, making you to see that they excel the vain janglings and the loud noises of the world as much as light excelleth darkness. And, to give you your due, you did well conceive and remember what I formerly said, which I do not now recant. Still I tell you that he is a believer unto salvation, who, being persuaded of the truth of all that is said of our Saviour, and all that he hath said in the gospel, abandons all other interests, and studies only to be obedient to him in all things. Let them say what they will of recumbency and reliance upon him; I think this man relies upon him, and trusts him more than anybody else, who, upon the mere credit of his word, is willing to relinquish all that he possesses for that which Christ hath promised, to leave all that he sees and feels for that which is invisible. This let us maintain to be the most sovereign degree of faith, which will lift us up as high as heaven, when the idle and lazy re-

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liance of bold pretenders will let them sink into the deepest place in hell.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

A discourse with an acquaintance of the pilgrim's about resting on Christ for salvation. The wilfulness and unskilfulness of some guides in the way to Jerusalem. For what end Christ died; and so what it is that our faith is principally to respect. That Christ is a means to our end; and therefore faith must go further than his person.

As they were talking thus together, that very man who was the occasion of their discourse chanced to pass that way, and, being of the pilgrim's acquaintance, joined himself in company to them: who, perceiving what the argument of their present debate was, and being of a violent nature, began with greater eagerness than ever to assert his own prejudices, and was plainly impatient of any contradiction. He raised up his voice to a strange height, and told them both in flat terms, that they adhered too much to their own righteousness; that they must deny it quite, and rest wholly upon Christ and his merits, believing in him for pardon and justification. And, indeed, his tongue ran at such a rate that the father could not get leave to thrust in a word till he had wearied himself with his own talk. And then he gravely asked him, Have you done, sir? Yes, replied he. Then proceeded the father: Let me entreat you to remember the old counsel, Soft and fair. You run a little too fast to make any good speed; and as you make too much haste in your discourse, so you do also in your confident resting upon Christ. I grant you, that we must not depend upon our own righteousness. But what danger is there of that, when men have none at all? Let them stay till they be righteous, and then let them deny it all as much as they can. But to what purpose is it to tell them this before they become good, unless it be to keep them from ever being so? To what end doth it serve to urge the wickedest man in the world to cast away that which he hath not? Whither doth it tend to bid them throw about them another's righteousness, to make them perfectly righteous, when they are endued with none of their own, but only to make them never seek for any else save that which is cast over them? The same I say concerning your

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resting upon Christ for salvation. Is there a man that understands himself, who will trust to any thing else but the merits, mercy, and power of Jesus, who is raised from the dead, and is able to deliver us from the wrath to come? But how comes it about that all men get thither so very soon? Why must this be mentioned as the first thing that faith hath to do, and as the only act that will justify a sinner? What is the reason of this forwardness, that when men ask, What shall we do to be saved, you answer presently, Cast yourself upon the merits of Christ? For this is your interpretation of the word, *Believe*, by which the apostle resolves that important question. Of what use is this earthly confidence, but only to make men prove hypocrites, and to slight the commands of Christ, without observing of which they may on this fashion be justified? I beseech you consider it well; and let me know by what art it is that men come to climb to the top bough, without ever touching those that are beneath? Let it be granted if you please, that faith in the mercy of God is that to which our religion tends; that it is as it were the very uppermost branch of the tree. But doth not the tree put forth many under branches, and must we not ascend by these to the highest? There are other acts of faith then that must lead the way, and whereby we go up to that lofty confidence; or else it is mere witchcraft which sets us on so high a perch. Suppose we say that we are justified only by this trust in the infinite pardoning mercy of a loving Father through his Son's blood. Let this, if you will have it so, be thought the only act that justifies. Yet doth not everybody see that no man can reasonably take the boldness to look for this pardoning mercy, unless he be made a new man, and sincerely obey the will of God? Must not his faith (for there is nothing else to do it) first produce such an entire and uniform holiness of heart and life as Christ requires, before he be so confident? No doubt of it, or else it is merely presumption. It is impossible that a man's reliance should be stronger, with any reason, than the rest of the acts of his faith are. And therefore should we not speak of faith in such words as will take in all that it hath to do; both that which respects our duty, as well as that which respects our benefit? Take heed, I beseech you again, of a double mischief which is very visible; one to others, and the second to yourself. First, beware how you speak of

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faith so loosely to your neighbours, in such terms as they may easily abuse. Do not say that justifying faith is merely a reliance on Christ for salvation. For though you mean well, and live better, yet the wicked of the world never understand this aright: which is the cause (if you would know all) that makes me so zealously oppose you in this matter. They all lay hold on him, and his righteousness, to cover all the filthiness wherein they live. Though you tell them that they ought to love him who hath died to procure righteousness for them, yet they love their sins better, and hope that he will love them never the worse for it. It is impossible to persuade an adulterer, a drunkard, or any such person (great numbers of which to my knowledge comfort themselves in their reliance on Christ) to become better, unless you give a better notion of faith than this. And then for yourself, I must warn you to take great heed that one piece of your faith do not outgrow another. Do not suffer it to shoot more upward than it doth downward; and to grow in tallness more than in thickness and strength. I mean, let it not lift up itself to heaven in assurance of God's love, but proportionably to its rooting in love and obedience to him. Let it not perk up in persuasions of God's mercy, but as it increases in strength and power to do him service. It is a slender tree you know, very weak, and easily broken, which springs up too much in length, but carries no body, and hath not a thickness answerable to its height. Such is the faith that mounts up in confidence, without an answerable spreading and enlarging itself in the observance of all God's commands, and bringing forth all the fruits of a lively faith. Nay, it is the very way to despair, to be thus forward. For as those tall and slender trees, by some strong blasts are apt to hang down their heads, and touch the ground from whence they come, so do these high confidences in a time of trial; and when men come to see how ungrounded they were, they are ready to end in as low a despair and great distrust of all God's mercy. Upon every occasion you shall see such people cast into horrid fits if they be at all observant of their duty; which they think is some desertion by God, but indeed proceeds from the too great forwardness of their faith, which did rise too high, and had not strength enough to bear it up. Nay, if they began in this confidence, and their faith pitched

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thus high at the very first, they ought to despair of God's favour till their faith hath purified their hearts. They must come down again from the top of the tree, and begin at the bottom, in obedience to all God's commands.

These things, with many others, seemed so perspicuous to the man, who had a great deal of honesty in him, that his confidence was strangely abated. And the father making a little pause, he altered the tone of his voice, and modestly said, I must ingenuously confess that I have been too rash in opposing and censuring of you. I am not one of those that will resist clear convictions, and contest merely that they may not seem to be overcome; but I acknowledge sincerely that I had too rude and confused notions of things, which precipitated me into this confidence of disputing with you. Be not troubled at it, replied the father, but rather think yourself happy that you understand more than you did; and that you have not lost, but found truth in the midst of a dispute. And since you are so humble as to confess some of your faults, I presume you will be thankful if you are told the rest. Remember it then, that it is very misbecoming to speak loud; to accompany your discourse with too much action; and to affirm any thing with too great a confidence and peremptoriness. But know withal, that I easily pardon them, and pass them by; because they are not so much your own, as the faults of your teachers from whom you learnt them, and many more besides. These are the least things that many of them are to be accused of; for there is a certain wilfulness (as it seems to me) that possesses their hearts; which will not let them exchange their unsafe and imperfect definitions of faith for those which are sounder and more complete. They are loath to acknowledge that they can err, or speak unproperly. They had rather defend that which is badly done or said, than study to make it better. And as men do in disorders of government, they abuse their wit, and study for reasons why it should be amiss, rather than how it should be amended. They will learn from none unless it be themselves. They will reject the clearest light, unless it shine out of their own minds. They would have truth confined to a party; the very phrases of which if you do not accept, it is enough to beget a quarrel. Be not offended, I beseech you, at this plainness, nor imagine

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that I intend to diminish your opinion of any men that are good; but only to give you caution, that you do not think them to be better than they are. You may conceive me indeed no competent judge of other men's discourses: will you hear therefore what a very wise man thought, a good while ago, of that manner of preaching which hath put you in that rude heat wherein we now saw you? His words are to this sense, (for I will not tie myself only to say what he hath said before me,) and they seem to be a very moderate sentence upon some men then who have left many followers behind them. "They give," saith he[f], "many pious exhortations, and they work ofttimes compunction of mind; but they are not skilled how to work a cure when they have made a wound. They can make men sick of their sins; but are not provided of efficacious remedies to purge them out. They let them see their sores; but then they are palliated, and seldom thoroughly healed. They know better how to bring souls to that question, *Men and brethren, what shall we do?* than how to give a good answer, and resolve the doubt which they have raised. They make men see they are very bad, but know not how to go about to make them good. They magnify faith, and make all the world sound with the noise of it; but still men are to seek what this great thing should be. They awake men out of their sleep, and make them look and gaze about them, but let them see nothing of that which they have to take in hand. They bid them indeed believe, but it is very hard to know when they do. They have entangled faith in disputes, when it should have been employed in good works. They have obscured a plain thing in many laborious definitions of it. They have made it so subtle, and to consist in so nice a point, that it is a difficult thing for any to see it. They handle matters of doubt weakly, and as before a people that will accept of any thing. In the doctrine of manners there is little to be had but generality and repetition. The bread of life they toss up and down, but break it not. They say in the gross, that men must live well, but they tell them not how to live. They bring not their doctrines down to cases of conscience, that a man may be warranted in his per-

[f] [The passage is adapted, the terms of the original not being literally preserved, from Lord Bacon's Essay "Of Church Controversies," Works, vol. vii. p. 55.]

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petual actions, whether they be lawful or not. Nor take they care to teach men their lawful liberty, as well as their restraints: to keep them from superstitious observances, as well as profane transgressions. Nay, I wish we could not say that it is the least of some men's care to promote a godly life. Faith is made a thing that is quite distinct from it. Good works and faith are commonly opposed in the justification of a sinner. The one is thought to exclude the other: and to be justified, it is said to be necessary that a man do nothing for it. The most that Christ can get is by way of gratitude, which you know is small or none in bad natures. At the best they will put him off with desires, or purposes, or an endeavour of a new life; though still these things be ineffectual." All which is said for no other end, but that you may not have men's persons in admiration. That you may be at liberty to *prove all things*, and *hold fast that which is good*. That you may not bear a greater reverence to masters than you do to truth: which is ready to become the portion of those who are more in love with it than with their party. And since you seem to me to be one of those, I shall spare no pains to bring you and truth together. But if you think it needful, I will give you further satisfaction in this which we have contested; and make you confess that there is nothing plainer than that which I have said of faith in Christ.

You will gratify me very much, replied the other, if you will be at the trouble to teach me this lesson better. And I am prepared already, by what I have now learnt, to consider and weigh not who, but what it is that I hear. Very good, said he again, let me catechise you then a little, and be not offended at this common and easy question: Do you not think that Christ came into the world for some end? Nay, was he not sent of God upon some high design? You cannot doubt of it, and therefore I will not stay for your answer. But tell me, what do you think that great end was? Wherefore, for instance, did he die and shed his blood? Was it only that our sins might be pardoned? Did he bear the cross that we might bear none? Did he deny his own will that we might have liberty to do ours? Is his death to excuse us from holy living? Hypocrisy indeed thinks so; but true religion teaches us that

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the intent of his death was, by keeping us from dying, to make us alive to God: by saving us from execution when we were condemned, to render us honest men: by denying of himself, to teach us to take up our cross and follow him. Will you hear what they that knew the mind of Christ have taught us in this argument. *He that committeth sin* (saith St. John[a]) *is of the devil, for the devil sinneth from the beginning; for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil:* which is as much as to say, that he appeared in the world that men might cease to sin. And so St. Paul tells us[b], *that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live to themselves, but to him that died for them and rose again:* i. e. will come to judge them, as a little before he had declared. This is the end for which he gave himself for his church, *that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish*[c]. Nor is it a slight and superficial holiness that he intends; the cleansing only of the outside, or the washing away of some pollutions; but *he gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works*[d]. For *he hath reconciled us* (as it is in another place) *in the body of his flesh through death, to present us holy, and unblamable, and unreprovable in his sight*[e]. And to say no more, St. Peter also teaches us[f], that *he his ownself bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes we are healed.* I know not what sense hypocrisy may pick out of these words, which hopes the scourges on Christ's back will save sinners from the lash; and that his death shall preserve them from dying, though their sins still live: but it is evident to them that are sincere, that the apostle's meaning is, our Saviour died, not merely to save us from dying of our wounds, or to take away the anguish and torment of them, but that our natures might be healed, and made sound and whole again. He is such a Physician as removes the pain and the smart by curing of the wound; that

[a] 1 John iii. 1. [b] 2 Cor. v. 15. [c] Eph. v. 25–27. [d] Tit. ii. 14. [e] Col. i. 21, 22. [f] 1 Pet. i. 22.

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easeth the part affected by making it well; that doth not hold his cripple patient a crutch to support him, but infuses strength into his feet and ankle-bones, and spirits into his sinews, that he may walk in the ways of God's commandments. I wish there was nothing harder than this to understand in the book of God. It is not a truth which men cannot, but which they will not understand. It is against a corrupt interest, or else they would not resist it. There is a strong party in their heart against this end of Christ's death, or else there would be no dispute about it. The bias that inclines their will is not on the side of this truth. It contradicts their pleasures, their unlawful gain, or some such thing which they are loath to leave, and therefore it shall be false, though never so clear in itself, lest these beloved sins should suffer any harm. But if there were any honesty in men's hearts, if they were void of guile, they would be able to see this without the help of so many testimonies out of holy writ; that it was not a thing worthy of the Son of God to come and die for any less end than to make the world better, and render it obedient to the Creator. For what do you mean, I beseech you, when you say that Jesus satisfied for your sins? What was it, do you think, that he gave satisfaction unto? Was it not all those glorious attributes of God; his wisdom, his truth, his justice, his holiness; saving the honour of which, he might now pass by the offences of returning sinners? Was it not that the credit of all these might be maintained, and yet the rebels not perish? that the sentence might not be executed, and yet the authority of the laws be preserved? There is nothing plainer than that this death of Christ did do great honour to God in the face of the world; asserted his right; gave countenance to his authority; proclaimed his righteousness and purity; was a notable testimony on his behalf against sinners; and so there could be nothing more powerful to move God to grant a pardon to those rebels that would submit to him, since now he should lose nothing by it but that which he had a mind to give away, and not demand, viz. the penalties which they had incurred by the breach of his laws. But is it not manifest then that God cannot love sin, nor be friends with sinners until they amend? Did not the death of Christ show that his nature is such that he cannot indulge men in their trespasses? Is it not apparent that it

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was not fit to pardon even penitent and returning offenders, unless he showed his displeasure at their offences? Did he not take care to secure his authority when he issued out a pardon? There is nothing more visible. And if hypocrisy had not overrun us, and thrust true reason as well as religion out of doors, men would easily see that Christ could not die merely to procure us a pardon, much less that men might sin with more security, and without any fear of punishment. No, natural reason tells us that men must needs be hateful to God while they are unlike him; that all the blood of Christ cannot wash them and make them lovely as long as they continue in actual rebellion against him. His very nature is against such men; his wisdom is an enemy to them. For how should he maintain any government in the world if he himself should be the cherisher of traitors? if he should take care for their protection, and set up a sanctuary to which they may boldly fly? if he should make the altar of the cross a refuge where they may find salvation and safety who are the opposers of his authority? It cannot be that God should be so liberal as to give away all his own right. He cannot quit his title and claim unto our universal obedience. It is impossible that Christ, by his death, should repeal all the laws of God, and absolve us from our duty. There is no question he intended to strengthen them when he made a relaxation: and when he procured a dispensation, he did more establish and secure that which is not dispensed withal. It is a rule of reason, that all exceptions do confirm the law. They tell us that it is not to be extended to any further indulgence. And therefore, Christ dying that the punishment might not be executed, this is all the remission that we are to expect, and not that God should remit all our duty to him.

It is very easy, if men were well disposed, to read at once, in the death of Christ, the greatest love of God to us, and the greatest love to his laws. His love to us appears in that he would for our good, and that we might not be eternally undone, lay aside his own right which he hath to punish: forgive us a debt which we were not able to pay: alter his law, and abate the strictness of it: dispense with the execution of the old law, and make a new one of grace and favour: and, that

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he might do so, and save both us from dying, and his law from contempt by our escape, that he would provide such a wise remedy as this of his Son's dying for us. Herein was his love indeed manifested, and we can never satisfactorily admire it, that he would have him die rather than us; that he would have him suffer that we might be delivered. But then this also plainly tells us the great love that he bears to holiness, to his laws, and to our duty; which he took care should not be injured by this favour and remission. Though he would not have all die out of love to us, yet he would have one, lest we should still continue in the love of sin. Though he would not have every one of us suffer for the breach of his laws, yet he would have Christ suffer, that we might not take the boldness still to break them. This death of his Son reduced things to an excellent temper; providing that neither we nor God might be damnified: that we might not suffer for what we have done, and that he might not suffer by our doing still the same: that he might be what he is, and we become what we ought: that the old original laws which require our obedience might remain in force, and the rigour of them not be executed for our disobedience: that he might part with some of his right, and yet recover all the rest. In one word, that he might be moved to let go his right to punish us, and we not moved to be careless in yielding him the rest of his right which he hath to our hearty and constant obedience.

I wish heartily that you and every body else would seriously consider this, and not expect that God should not require your service and obedience: for it is so much his due, that for the sake of his Son he cannot part with his right and claim unto it. Nay, I have a bolder thing to say than all this, and that is, that the death of Christ is so far from intending our pardon only, that it is not the chiefest thing that he intends. Of the two, the purifying of our hearts and lives was more in his design than the forgiveness of sin, and this was but in order to the other. So much you may easily gather from many of those places of the holy writings which were mentioned before; for though he *bare our sins in his own body on the tree*, yet it was for this end, this was the ultimate scope of it, *that we being dead to sin, might live unto righteousness.* And so another

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apostle saith, *He gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world* [g]. By showing his willingness to pass by our faults, he would move us to acknowledge them, to repent of them, and become more dutiful. This must be done before we can actually receive his pardon and absolution, according to that of the apostle: *He saved us according to his mercy by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost; that being justified by his grace we should be made heirs of eternal life* [h]. Where it is visible to them that will not shut their eyes, that his mercy cannot save us unless we become new creatures, and that this must go before the justification which we expect by the grace of God. And indeed reason tells us that Christ must needs have more regard to his Father's rights than to our accommodation: and intend more the reclaiming of his rebellious subjects than the procuring of their pardon.

Which is a thing so apparent, that I am ashamed to do more than mention it. And besides, by this time I believe you will be ready to ask me a question who have asked you so many, and demand To what purpose have you made this long discourse? The answer is ready, and the end of it is as clear as any thing that hath been said, viz. that since justifying faith is to have respect to our Saviour and his death just according to the intention of God in sending of him; it cannot be so little as the casting ourselves upon him for pardon of sin. The former part of this argument you will grant me; for we must look upon an object according as it is proposed. Faith cannot apprehend things otherways that God hath revealed them: it cannot receive the Son of God in any other manner than as the Father gave him. The consequent then God himself demands your assent unto: for you see that he had another end, and a far greater also, in giving his Son for us, than the forgiveness of our offences. He gave him, that he might cleanse and purge our souls from all filthiness; that he might make us holy and unblamable in his sight. Why do you not then thus receive him? Or how comes it about that you will not only put this end behind the other, but also speak as if justifying faith had nothing else to do but to lay hold on the merits of Christ?

[g] Gal. i. 4. [h] Titus iii. 5, 6, 7.

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This I am sure you make to comprehend the whole notion of it, for we hear of nothing besides in its definition. This is either all the business of faith, or else you do very ill not to express the rest. I beseech you in the name of Christ that died for us, reform this grand error. Let your faith be as large as the gospel itself. And let this be your principal care, that it may *purify your heart.* When you expect to be justified through faith in his blood, remember that it was shed to *purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God*[i].

And that I may resume the beginning of my discourse, and so make way for a speedy conclusion, let me ask you another question or two, which seem to be very pertinent to my present design. If there was an end, and so great an one as you have confessed of Christ's coming into the world, then what is he but a means unto this end? *He died,* saith the apostle, *that he might bring us to God*[k]. And *by him we believe in God, who raised him from the dead, and gave him glory, that our faith and hope might be in God*[l]. Our belief in God then (which is no small thing, but comprehends all our duty to him) was the end of Christ's appearing, and of all he did: and therefore must not he stand in the place of a means to it? It must be so, said the other. But what then, continued the father, will become of your *resting on Christ,* and your staying or leaning on him for salvation? Is it not manifest that this only is insufficient for your purpose? that it will let you fall to the ground, and leave you short of your happiness? Is it not plain that this faith fixes itself where it should proceed, and rests in the means whereby it should advance to a noble end? There is nothing methinks more evident than that the faith which justifies a sinner is not that which lastly terminates itself in the person of Christ; and which doth not clearly and in its own nature produce a cordial obedience to God. Means must be used, and not rested in. From whence it unavoidably follows that Christ himself and his merits must not be rested in as the last end of our faith; but it must go further and beget an holy life. Let us so speak of faith then, that it may be visible whither it tends. Let it be seen at what it aims; and that it designs more than the casting ourselves into the arms of

[i] Heb. ix. 14. [k] 1 Pet. iii. 18. [l] Cap. i. 21.

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Christ, that he may protect us from the wrath to come. Learn, I beseech you, before it be too late, that Jesus cannot save a man by a naked confidence in him, i. e. in his person, or any thing that he hath done or can do. All they that think so reproach our Saviour, and make him the advocate of sin, and not of sinners; one that shall save their lusts, and not them from the power of them. They stay in the half-way to heaven, and so shall never come thither. They rest when they should go forward. They lean upon that staff wherewith they should walk. They make Christ their support only, who should be also their strength. They cast themselves upon him, but would not have him carry them to God and a divine nature. They make him to stand in their way, and not to be the way unto obedience. They render him an enemy to God, who shall keep his subjects with him, and detain them from their duty. They content themselves with what they find in him, and care not for any righteousness of their own. They rest satisfied with what he hath done, and by virtue of that do nothing themselves. And so he that is made of God a means of life, they make to themselves a means of death: because they make him indeed the end of all, and not the means to our end.

CHAP. XXXIX.

The joy which the pilgrim conceived in this discourse: and how much he applauded his happiness in having such a friend. The serenity of his condition after all these clouds. And how nothing troubled him but only that he could do so little to testify his love to his guide: who easily gave him satisfaction by showing the true grounds of friendship.

It is not to be expressed what contentment the man took in this discourse, for which he rendered him a thousand thanks, professing that he had learnt a great deal in a little time; and that though he never intended less than to become a good man by faith in Christ, yet he did not so well understand till now how to go about the business. But the joy of our pilgrim was far greater both for this acquaintance of his, and for himself. He thought that all his life would be little enough wherein to thank him; that he had turned the mention of his weaknesses

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and frailties into the occasion of so great a benefit unto them both. I was going to tell you (said he, when the father had done), that I knew not whether I should begin to thank our Lord or you first, for this great kindness to me. But I think I need not stand in doubt, for you are so like him, that if I commend your charity, and render you thanks for it, I do a real honour thereby to him. You have been the ease of mine heart; the guide of my mind; the pilot of my soul; the security and stay of my life; my second and better self; my tutelar angel whereby I have been defended from innumerable dangers. And when I say so, I acknowledge God to have been all this, who by your hand hath imparted these favours to me. I know that I stand indebted to his fatherly goodness for so many blessings, that I know not where to end the account. But for the beginning; I cannot but, next to the favours his Son hath brought us, place the gift of your friendship. You will suffer me now, sure, to please myself a little, and to glory in it; though heretofore you suppressed my thoughts as they were issuing forth. I know very well at what rate my neighbours esteem riches, and how proud they grow, if they can show you gold and jewels. But if heaven had asked me what jewel it pleased me to be presented withal, I would have answered, Give me a friend: send me an honest friend. This is my riches, my treasures, my most precious jewel. It is not possible there should be any thing given me of equal value. I am so proud of it, that it tempts me to be vainglorious, and to proclaim to the world how wealthy I am. And if we may judge of the price of things by their scarcity, am I not in the right? What is there more rare than this pure friendship? Where shall we find two men that have one heart; and love without any interest? Must we not go back to the golden times, and have recourse to the age of poetry, to find such an happy pair? What place is not filled with that old complaint, O friends, nobody is a friend! There are few hearts that are not double; few tongues that are not cloven. They that are not treacherous are too weak; and they that are not weak, yet are too wise to be tied in this sacred bond. How can you blame me then, that I think myself somebody now that I am possessed of so great a treasure? which, besides its rarity, is to be highly esteemed for its stability and lasting nature. It is not subject

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to the change of fortune, nor the rust of time, nor the violence of men: nor can it be lost by my own negligence, for a small care will serve to keep a true friend. Let others go and beg of great men their favour: let others glory in the preferment they already enjoy; I envy not their happiness, may Heaven but please to preserve my friend. It is the custom of many, I see, to fetch the causes of their felicity or unhappiness from the heavenly bodies; and to ascribe what they suffer or enjoy here below to some good or malignant influences from above. But as for me, I do not think there is any planet so lucky as a faithful friend; as, on the contrary, none so malicious as a false-hearted companion. Let them who list then observe the stars and their favourable aspects; I will seek upon earth for that which must make me happy. Let them observe how Jupiter and Mercury look upon them in all their affairs; it imports most to me to mark what men I converse withal. And you are the person, sir, whom I fix my eye upon, and whose good aspect and charitable influence I still implore. Do you accompany me always in my travels; be you my Mercury in my journey; and in this conjunction I shall not fear any evil that may threaten me, nor despair any more of finishing that which is so happily begun. This is the sum of my desires, that you would ever exercise your wonted pity towards me, and pardon my follies. For the whole stock of comfort that I am furnished withal can only serve for a meaner affliction than the loss of your love would prove unto me. And yet I hope that I shall not be altogether so troublesome to you in the rest of my journey; but rather become your joy. It shall be my daily petition that I may spend my days in that evenness and steadiness of mind wherein I find myself fixed by your means: that I may be humble, and wait patiently upon the Lord, and be of good courage; believing that he will strengthen mine heart, and that one day I shall in Sion appear before God.

To which good prayer the father instantly said, Amen, wishing that he might ever find him in this good temper, and that he would likewise remember the counsel of the apostle, who bids us *rejoice in the Lord always*[m]. For there is not a more evident token and apparent sign of true wisdom and

[m] [Phil. iv. 4.]

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profiting in virtue, than a constant serenity and unconstrained rejoicing. And truly, said he, I think I need not do so little as desire this for you, but may be bold to turn my wish into a confidence; for I am apt to prophesy that after so many conflicts you will go in more peace to Jerusalem. And so it proved, as I have since heard; and after this he every day had a view of that blessed place. The sky indeed was sometimes a little cloudy, which rendered the sight of it more duskish and obscure; yet he kept a calm in his mind in his greatest dulness, and hoped for sunshine days, which came a great deal sooner, by not raising a new and thicker cloud through the storms of his own passions. But I cannot say, for the present, what the ensuing part of their travels were, my own observation here having an end. Only thus much I observed before I parted, that he who once was afraid that he loved his friend too much, fell into a suspicion of himself that he did not embrace him with such an affection as he deserved. And that after all these contrary humours, the temper of their friendship was so excellent, of such consistency, and so well settled, that as nothing could disorder it, so nothing but death alone could divide it; and death itself, they were confident, could never put an end to it. And, indeed, this was the thing that I left them in expectation of, and which they were constantly endeavouring to prepare themselves for, as that which would not destroy, but perfect their love. This they often talked of, knowing that it would never come the sooner for their thinking and speaking of it. This they looked upon as a common friend to both, that would translate them to those happy regions where friendship is in its kingdom and reigns over every heart. All the favour they would have begged, if it were wont to grant any petitions, was, that with one stroke it should arrest them both, and carry them thither together. And if anybody could have made good the Paracelsian promise of spinning out the life of man to a length equal with the clue of time, and making our vital oil of the same durable temper with that which feeds the lamps of heaven; all things were so in common between them, that I verily think one of them would not have accepted of such a courtesy, on condition to enjoy it alone without the other. No, they rather desired, as I said, that the one might not see the other expire; but that

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the same hand might cut off both their threads at once, and that one moment might put out those lamps which were not willing to burn asunder.

All the wishes that our pilgrim made besides this was only that they might live so long till he could give some remarkable proof of his affection to his guide. For though he knew that he loved him above all things, and could contradict even his former wishes by dying for him; yet it did sometimes a little discontent him that he was in no capacity to show his tenderness but only by words and protestations. Though the wisdom of his conductor had stood him in so great stead, and he could not well spare any of it, yet he was so foolish now and then as to think that if he had been less wise, he himself had been more happy; because then he might have stood in need to receive those counsels which now he only gave, and been requited for those courtesies which now he made him a pure debtor for. Many other benefits also that are usually communicated between friends he found himself utterly destitute of all means to confer, they being either not in his power, or his guide in no need of them. This sometimes raised a small disquiet in his mind; and one day, I remember, he could not contain himself, but he began a discourse to this purpose, which shall put an end to this present relation.

I should think myself, said he, the happiest man alive, were I but able to correspond with you in the duties and offices of friendship; and were I not constrained to return you only a weak and fruitless passion for that efficacious love which hath done me so many services. It troubles me a little to find that my passion is as useless as it is extreme, and as void of benefit to you as it is violent in itself. It is no less barren than, I doubt, it may be burdensome; and hath as little profit, as I see it hath brought you much trouble. Though the honour be very great you have done me in bestowing such a place upon me in your heart; yet I know not sometimes whether I should not complain in the enjoyment of a favour, which, as it was not in my hands to deserve, so I cannot possibly requite. True, indeed, it is that I have given myself to you; but that is no more than strict justice exacts, since I have received yourself

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as a gift to me. Friendship, they say, is a commutation of hearts; and therefore it is but fit that you should have mine in room of your own. And yet, alas! mine is of such small value, that I doubt you will be wholly a loser by the change. Is there no means for me to do you service, or to rest content with a will to serve you? Cannot you either show me how I may be useful to you, or show yourself a disposition to it in that heart which I have given you? I should be satisfied, I think, if you knew my will as well as myself. It remains in your power, not my own, to settle my mind in peace; if you will first believe I love you, and then set a value upon that love, which you know is the cause of all well-doing, and ought not to be blamed for want of power.

Very true, said his guide, who laid hold of that word, I think that I have found a treasure in your love; and I will have it pass for current payment, though it cannot express itself in such sensible effects as you would have it. It is enough to me that you have such a passionate affection for me, though it could never find the means to do any thing, but only tell me how hearty it is. I am pleased with the intentions and desires which you have to do me any good. It is an extraordinary contentment to me to contemplate the imaginations which are in your mind of what you would do for me, could power be courted by your will to come and join itself unto it. They are the vulgar who call nothing benefits but what they can feel with their fingers. It is the portion of gross souls to be insensible, unless your courtesies, to come at their hearts, pass through their hands. The purer and more refined spirits touch the very souls of their friends, and feel the kindness which lies in their breasts. They are so subtle as to see a courtesy while it is so young as to be but only in design. They touch it before it be clothed in matter, or have passed beyond the confines of thoughts. They meet it in the first rudiments, and embrace it while it is only in meaning, and drawn in the imagination. They receive these inward acts of love as most pure and spiritual, being separate from all the terrestrial part which affect the vulgar minds. And, in one word, there is not any thing dearer to them than those motions of the soul, which, finding nothing they can do correspondent to their own great-

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ness and force, do terminate in themselves. They are pleased to see them stay there, and go no further; because there is nothing fairer than themselves to be met withal wherein to end and rest.

Do not depreciate your affection, therefore, nor vilify it in that manner you are wont, as though it were not worthy my acknowledgment. Do not tell me any more that it is no valuable love which doth not serve our friends; for this service depends upon occasions, and they depend on an higher Being, and are only in the dispose of Providence. All that I can be beholden to you for, I have received already from you; and for the rest, if it could be bestowed, I must make my acknowledgments to something else. Be contented, then, that you give all that is in your hands; and that if it were in them to make occasions, you would still let those be wanting which most of all prove a friend. Nay, let me tell you, I am so favourable in my opinion to your affection, and so apt to give it the best advantage, that I am not yet resolved, but there may be as much nobleness in the handsome acknowledgment of a kindness as there is in the conferring of that which deserves such acknowledgment. But, besides all this, let me ask you a question, (for I am resolved to ferret this scruple out of the bottom of your heart,) Should you not love me unless I had done you benefits? Tell me the truth; is there any great dearness, think you, created in people's hearts towards each other by this means? For my part, I have often found the observation true, that the remembrance of benefits wears out of men's minds, as grief doth out of the heart of afflicted persons, from which every moment steals a part. Time hath power over the one as well as the other; and it diminishes the affection which is the fruit of favours, as it doth the sorrow which is produced by losses and calamities. Nay, so little power have benefits to make a friend, that they sometimes make a foe. There are some men the more they owe the more they hate. A little debt makes a man a debtor, but a great one makes him an enemy. What is it then that produces a durable friendship? Nothing, sure, but worth and desert, together with the agreeableness of a person to our humour, and his resemblance to our disposition. The impression which these

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make can never be blotted out. Time, which wipes away the remembrance of benefits, can never efface the sense of worth and merit. We always carry in our minds the amiable perfections and accomplished qualities of worthy persons. We always think of those who have touched our inclinations by their agreeable nature. And I appeal to you, whether you could refuse me your love, though you were not so much beholden to me as you now acknowledge; and whether all the kindnesses in the world would produce a friendship with me, if you saw not something else to woo your affection. No, no, my friend, it is gratitude, not friendship, which is the proper effect of benefits. They ought to dispose us to suitable returns, and an hearty acknowledgment; but they cannot oblige us to entertain him for a friend who is bountiful toward us. They may possibly make our friendship grow, but they cannot beget it: they may give it some nourishment, but they cannot produce and bring it forth. It depends upon an higher cause; it owes its original to some nobler thing; to that from whence all benefits and good offices ought to come; I mean, a great love and a sincere affection; which, if deserts be not wanting, is more powerful to move than all the gifts in the world, and is able without them all to tie us fast to a worthy person. Be so just then to yourself and to me as to think that I am your friend, though you do not bestow those benefits on me which you desire; since they can serve only (as I said) to make me thankful, but not your friend. I esteem you very highly for yourself, and upon the account of your own proper worth, which, I am sure, doth put me into the next disposition to be your friend. And since you have added to your own desert a very great love to me, that cannot but complete it, and make me perfectly yours. This love alone hath been thought sufficient to make a friend; and indeed is more powerful than any benefits. According to that of Hecaton[n]; 'Wouldst thou know how to get a friend? I will show thee, and thou shalt use neither medicament, herb, or enchantment to produce the affection thou desirest. If thou wilt be beloved, love.' When virtue then and it have made a league, and it shows itself in a subject

[n] ["Hecaton ait, 'Ego tibi monstrabo amatorium, sine medicamento, sine herba, sine ullius veneficæ carmine. Si vis amari, ama.'"—Sen. Epist. ix.]

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whose qualities also are worthy to be embraced, its force must needs be irresistible, and leave us no power to withstand its desires.

The poor pilgrim remained astonished a while at the kindness of this discourse; and, finding himself overwhelmed with the weight of such love, was fain to strive very much to recover a power of making this short reply unto it. I am utterly ignorant, saith he, what worth it is that you ascribe to me, which hath brought me into your good esteem, and obtained me the noble title of your friend. I see that I please you, but I know not what it is that should give you that pleasure. I find myself very happy; but what hath advanced me to this felicity I cannot define. And truly, since it is your will to have me so, I will not be too busy and curious in examining the causes of my good fortune; nor will I seek to lessen my worth, lest in so doing I should upbraid you with a bad foundation of your love. No; I will rather think I am worth something, than render your judgment nothing worth. I will think of myself as you would have me, that you may not seem to be mistaken. There is nothing else can make me of any value, unless it be that I had the wit to judge of the deservings of such a person as yourself. It is a mark, they say, of some sufficiency, to be able to discern an able person from a flashy wit. It is a note, I have heard, of great wisdom, to choose an excellent friend. By this, I am told, a man is known to others; and I have little else whereby to know myself. This is the chiefest thing that makes me see I am not so unfortunate as I thought. I perceive I am worthy of some esteem, because I had the judgment to set such an esteem upon yourself. For I must needs confess, that though your favours could have imposed a greater necessity upon me of loving than you will allow, yet I feel that I am not beholden to them for my inclination to love you: that is something more ancient than any benefits you can bestow, and depends only on your own merits. And let it not be judged an amplification to say, that they are so great that they will not leave it to my choice either whether I will love you or no, or how much I will love you, but they constrain me to love you as much as I can. It is a constraint, indeed, to which I am very willing, there being no violence

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offered but of what my own judgment is the cause: yet it is irresistible; and I can never be of any other mind, nor have a will to dispose of my affections otherways. Nay, I cannot for my life but think that your favours are a part of your deserts, and that there is something peculiar in them to merit mine affection. They flow purely from your own goodness, and owe not themselves so much as to my entreaties. You have not put me to the trouble of begging your kindnesses, but they ran to me of their own accord. I did but ask; and you were pleased to open your heart, and make me a liberal gift. I did but show my need; and you instantly enriched me with yourself. And ever since, I have not had so great a care to conceal my griefs as you have taken to find them out: nor have you suffered my troubles to speak, before you saw them in my looks. All your favours, likewise, have flowed so freely from you, that there was no hope they should return again. They have brought me a great deal of happiness, but could not be thought to come to fetch any to him that sent them. This adds exceeding much to the esteem I have conceived for you: this will ever make me to propound you as the pattern of an excellent friend. And if I were now to die, it would be one of the last words I should speak to those that love me: Remember that those will be your worst enemies, not to whom you have done evil, but who have done evil to you; and those will be your best friends, not to whom you have done good, but who have done good to you.

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ADVICE TO A FRIEND.

Ecclus. xiv. 13.

Do good unto thy friend before thou die.

Ζωὴ τῆς ἄνω φύσεως ἀγαπή ἐστι.

Greg. Nyssen. [Vid. Hom. ix. in Cant. tom. i. p. 605.]

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IMPRIMATUR

Sam. Parker, R. Rmo in Christo Patri ac Domino Dno Gilberto, Divina Providentia Archiep. Cant. a Sacris Domesticis.

Maii 14, 1673.
Ex Æd. Lambeth.

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AN ADVERTISEMENT

FROM THE PUBLISHER TO THE READER.

READER,

I HAVE nothing to say either of this book or of its author; but only desire the reader, if he like the counsels which are here given, for the promoting and better ordering of devotion, and for the preserving of a pious soul in peace and cheerfulness, that he would be so kind and faithful to himself as to follow them. And the hope I have, that after a perusal they will invite him so to do, makes me secure the author will not be displeased to see that exposed to public view which was at first intended only for a private person's use: for if the advice be good, the more common it grows so much the better it is; and it will not be the less mine when it is gone into other hands.

Plato, I am told, calls love the ornament of all, both of the gods and of men; the fairest and most excellent guide, whom every man ought to follow, and celebrate with hymns and praises: and what is there in which we can better express and declare it to others than in communicating to them that which we hold in highest esteem ourselves? It was that which first produced this treatise, and from thence it comes abroad.

That which, the same person saith, is the father of delights, of mirth, of whatsoever is graceful and desirable, was the parent of this book: and therefore let it be accepted with the same kindness wherewith it was writ, and is now printed. Let all the faults (if you find any) be overlooked with a friendly eye; and do not discourage so excellent a virtue as friendship (to which we owe the best things in the world) by severe and harsh censures of any thing that it produces.

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But I need not, I think, be solicitous about this: the pious design of the book being sufficient to give it protection, if it cannot gain it approbation. It hurts nobody, and therefore may pass itself with more safety; and it offers its service to do everybody good; which methinks should be taken kindly, even by those who stand in no need of it. As for those who shall make use of it, and find any benefit by it; they will complain perhaps only of the author's thriftiness, and wish he had been more liberal of his advice. And so, it is like, he would, if he had not consulted his friend's ease more than his own; and considered rather what would be useful, than what would make a great show. You will take a wrong measure of his kindness, if you judge of it by the bulk of the book; which was purposely contracted into a little room, that it might be a constant companion, and as easy to carry in mind as it is to carry in one's hand. And let the defects of it be what they will, they may be supplied out of one of the rules you here meet with, if you please to make use of it; which is, to choose a good guide; from whom you may receive further advice in any thing that is necessary for your progress in piety, or for the settling your conscience in peace.

And that we may none of us ever want such a faithful and skilful person to conduct us, and that we may receive a benefit by these and all other good counsels, let us heartily join in that prayer to God, which is the Collect for this day, and add it often to the ensuing devotions.

"Leave us not, we beseech thee, destitute of thy manifold gifts, nor yet of grace to use them alway to thy honour and glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

St. Barnaby's Day, 1673.

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ADVICE TO A FRIEND.

My Friend,

MAN bears some resemblance, and may not unfitly be compared, to a diamond or such like precious stone, whose darker parts confess that it is of the earth, but the brighter look as if it had borrowed some rays from the sun or stars. He is a substance, I mean, consisting of a terrestrial body and a celestial spirit: with his feet he touches the earth, but with his head he touches heaven. Though the neighbourhood knows whence his body came, and remembers the time perhaps when it lay in the dark cell of his mother's womb; yet his soul doth absolutely deny that it is of so mean extraction; and, casting its eyes upwards, calls to mind its high descent and parentage; and takes it to be no presumption to affirm that we are the offspring of God.

He cannot therefore but find in himself propensions and desires, not only different from, but contrariant to each other. For since two worlds meet in him, and he is placed in the confines of heaven and earth, his will must needs hang between two widely distant goods: the one propounding pleasures to his body, and the other to his mind. And though once there was a time when these two preserved such a friendship, and gave such due satisfaction to one another's just interests and inclinations, that they did not break out into an open war, yet this peace lasted not so long as to let us feel the blessings and happiness thereof. But that part whose kindred and acquaintance was in this world, apprehended the first occasion that

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offered itself to quarrel with the other, whose native country was not so visible through walls of flesh; and, denying to consent unto it, plainly rebelled, and entered into a state of hostility against it. This it might do with the more ease, because two parts of those three into which the soul is ordinarily divided stand very much affected to the body and its concernments[a]:—the *desiring* part, that is always ready to run to any thing and embrace it, which hath the appearance of a bodily good: the *angry* part, that is no less forward to shun and to make defence against whatsoever seems to be a bodily evil: to the *rational* is committed the direction and government of these; which that it may manage aright, it is to maintain a constant conversation with an higher good, to which all the lower desires and passions ought to be subordinate and subject.

These are handsomely compared by a noble Greek philosopher to the three ranks or orders of men that are in a city; the servants, the soldiers, and the magistrates[b]. The first of which are to do all the work, and make such provisions as are necessary for its support: the second serve for a guard to protect and defend it from all dangerous assaults: and the third sits in council, pronounces judgment, issues out orders, makes rules, and gives direction how both shall be employed. But so it falls out, that as the slaves and the soldiers sometimes prove mutinous and unruly, and, combining their forces together, make themselves masters of the conservators of the true peace and liberty; so have the violent desires that are in us of enjoying a sensual good and of avoiding all outward evils and inconveniences, grown to such a headstrong and unbridled humour, that they have overtopped reason, and refuse to hearken to the authority and to obey the dictates of our understanding.

Many ways have been tried both by God and man to reduce them to a good agreement again; but, though all fair satisfaction hath been offered, and is allowed, to the lower part, it would not yield to a surrender of that power and sovereignty

[a] Ἐπιθυμητικόν, Θυμικόν, Λογικόν.

[b] Τὸ θητικόν, τὸ πολεμικόν, τὸ φυλακτικόν.—Proclus, l. i. in Timæum. [p. 11.]

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which it hath usurped. As a company of factious people, that strive for superiority over their governors, when they have compassed their designs and possessed themselves of the throne, are with more difficulty suppressed than they were before kept in subjection; so it is with the multitude of men's furious lusts and passions, now that they have dethroned reason, and advanced themselves into the seat of government. Having tasted very strongly of a sensual good, and felt the sweetness (as they take it) of being absolute, they are loath to be denied the license which they have so long enjoyed, and will by no means grant any obedience to be due to an higher power.

God was pleased therefore to manifest himself in our flesh, to countenance the claim and assert the title of our mind and understanding; and, by showing its undoubted right of government, to take up this controversy, and put an end to these sad contests, which have happened to the ruin of mankind. In the Lord Jesus there appeared such an absolute and constant dominion of the Spirit, as in the first Adam, after his fall, there did of the flesh. And he came not only to give us a glorious example, to overawe all unruly motions in us by his divine authority, and to inspire our feeble spirits with some courage by his great and precious promise of eternal life; but to comfort us (by his death, resurrection, and exaltation at the right hand of the Majesty on high) with the hopes of a mighty power from above to aid and assist us in our Christian conflict with all unreasonable desires. This he actually sends into our souls, to give them sufficient force and ability for the doing of their duty, redeeming themselves from this slavery, and recovering their ancient rights and liberty.

And in all those who attend unto his holy counsels, and receive his Divine grace, and are renewed and led by his good Spirit, there appear many happy tokens of the soul's victory; and they are daily winning new conquests over the flesh with all the affections and lusts thereof. The heavenly good seems so great in their eyes, that they cannot (upon any terms) think of submitting their souls any longer to attend wholly or chiefly upon the pleasures and satisfactions of the lower man. The mind is furnished with such right opinions, the will is become

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so tractable and compliant with their resolutions, the affections grown so subject and obedient to the orders and commands of both; in short, God and his will is so seriously loved, and their spirit strives so earnestly after the ardours and fervent devotion of love; that the ancient government is again restored, its lost authority, rights, and royalties are manifestly recovered, and they live in good hope to be more than conquerors over all temptations from the world, the flesh, and the devil; aspiring to an humble rejoicing, glorying, and triumph over all these enemies.

But notwithstanding all this, these men remain still both flesh and spirit. The body is not destroyed, the goods wherein it delights have not altered their nature, its habitation is not removed from their neighbourhood; and it retains the same inclination to them, and they are often remembering it of its forepast fruitions; and, which is worst of all, the soul cannot presently recover its perfect health and soundness, but feels the maims and the bruises that it got when it was formerly beaten down and oppressed by them. Hence it comes to pass that, for some time at least, there are many motions made for a revolt; and every thing in the world is tampering with the heart, to corrupt and bring it over again to their party; and the mind itself, in some fits, almost wearied with their importunity, may be ready to lend half an ear to these solicitations. There is not such a perfect peace established, but there will be some endeavours of the fleshly part to resume its power, and get into its hand its pretended liberty. Yea, by the violence of many outward accidents, the mind may sometimes fall into a dream, and be tempted to muse whether there be sufficient reason to prefer those future and unseen goods before present enjoyments: the will may begin to bend itself to some civil carriage and fair compliance with the flesh: the affections, being much wooed and complimented, may feel themselves in danger to be inveigled; or the heat, at least, and liveliness of devotion may, in such a condition, be much abated and impaired.

And indeed it is not to be expected that the body should go along as nimbly as the spirit would have it towards a good

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with which it is not acquainted. All that the mind can do is to take a very great care that it move itself with as slow a pace towards that good to which the other is most inclined. That we love these outward things cannot be blamed; but it will require much diligence to keep our hearts from doting on that for which we naturally have no small affection. That we hold some acquaintance with them can by no means be avoided; but that we grow not too familiar with them ought to be our prudent care, and cannot, without some difficulty, be prevented. There will some kindnesses pass between us, and we cannot deny the body these sensible pleasures; but that our souls should thereby suffer themselves to be undermined and their interest betrayed, there is no small danger: for while the good of the body is near at hand, and the good of the soul is at some distance; while that which is near seems great, and that which is remote seems small; while the one is present, and the other future; while things present call upon us, and we must earnestly call for things future; while the one is always before us, and the other comes but at certain seasons; while the one is of old, and the other but of a late acquaintance, (we having been bred up with the one, and being but brought to the other, the one coming first, and the other thereby prejudiced,) as long, I say, as there are these plain advantages on the one side; if we use not attentive diligence to give the soul just and true information, they will prevail with it inconsiderately to slight the far greater advantages on the other. Just as you see sometimes a wild-headed and unthrifty heir, though there be no comparison between his future inheritance and a small sum of present money, yet, for the pleasing of a violent passion, sells the reversion of an estate, which, after some years, would make him very rich and happy; so do souls that are not serious and deliberate, heedlessly resign, for mere trifles, their apparent title to such things as are of most importance to their true and lasting felicity. Though the possessions of the other world be as far beyond all our enjoyments here as this world is above nothing; yet, because these things here are present, and because they are ever soliciting and offering themselves to us, and because they entertain our desires with pleasure, and because they put us to little pains to give ourselves the fruition of them, they are wont

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to prevail with sleepy and careless minds to purchase them, though they part with all their interest in the other world as the price of the bargain.

From hence there grows a necessity of that precept of vigilance and watchfulness which our Lord Christ hath given his soldiers, lest through subtle insinuations, or frequent and violent assaults, this old enemy get up again, and establish itself in a new and more grievous tyranny. Augustus deservedly reproved the folly of Alexander; who, as the story goes, was troubled in his mind for want of employment, after the conquest (as he imagined) of the whole world; for he should have considered, (said that great emperor,) that there is no less pains and wisdom requisite to keep a possession than there is to win it. We must not think that we have ended our warfare, when we have reduced the flesh to some terms of obedience and peace: but the strongest soul will find it necessary to keep a constant guard, or else that enemy, whose weakness consists in our watchfulness, will succeed in its endeavours to get all into its hands once more, and settle itself in that throne from whence it was so happily deposed. Whensoever we grow remiss, the experience of all the world tells us, our souls lose as much in a week as they have been acquiring by a whole year's labour. To fall down is very easy, and we tumble apace: but we cannot climb the hill without difficulty, and by little steps and slow motions we advance towards the upper world and the celestial blessedness, which will cost us much patience and unwearied industry before we approach it.

But what will keep the mind, may you demand, from this remissness? what remedies can you prescribe to preserve a feeble spirit from being stupified and lulled asleep sometimes with these gaudy poppies, these fair and soft enjoyments which appear everywhere, and continually surround us? Who is able to keep a perpetual watch and never take a nap? In such a long work, who can choose but be sometimes weary? When I consider my own infirmity and the enemy's strength, my natural love to these worldly things and their restless importunity, the length of my journey and my aptness to be tired, and especially when I see so many seeming champions that

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have been overcome, so many that did run well who have grown slack or retired; I am afraid, may your heart say, that I shall never hold out to the end, and maintain the ground steadfastly on which I stand.

And indeed it must be confessed, that the spirit is not always alike able to make a valiant resistance and courageous opposition. But what through the defect and disorder of the bodily instruments which it uses, and what through strange occasions and unusual accidents that it meets withal to surprise it, and what through the strength of some one object either of joy or grief, or such like, that seizes mightily upon the imagination, and what through its own timorousness, which makes the enemy grow confident, and what through the want now and then of those delectable motions of God's good Spirit, and those heavenly consolations wherewith it hath been transported; it may fall into some listlessness and dulness, and grow so faint, that it hath but little heart to maintain its Christian warfare.

But yet for all this you ought not to despond, nor be quite discouraged at the thoughts that you may possibly one day find yourself in these unhappy circumstances. You are not left without a remedy, either for the preventing of the fall of your soul into this condition, or for the delivery and raising of it up, should it chance to slide into it, or for its safety and preservation, that it may receive no harm whilst it lies therein, and can for the present meet with no means to rid itself of so great a burden. This little book comes to bring you some relief, and lend you some support and aid in such a case. It hath no other business but to give your soul the best assistance that mine can afford it for its security: that whatsoever assault may be made upon you, whatsoever weaknesses you may feel in yourself, and whatsoever advantage the enemy may make of them, the flesh notwithstanding may never be able to draw you back again under its power; but your spirit may stand fast in its pious resolution, and come off with victory and triumph at the last.

And let the divine Spirit of wisdom and grace, I humbly beseech the Father Almighty, so guide my pen, that your soul

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may receive no less benefit by the reading of these papers, than mine doth contentment in the writing of them, and that the good they do you may be proportionable to the love from whence they come. Amen.

SECT. I.

And in the first place, let me advise you to bring yourself into as great an acquaintance and familiarity as ever you can with unseen and spiritual things; and to make your mind so sensible of them, that they may seem the most real and substantial beings. You easily discern how suitable this counsel is to the foregoing discourse; and you can tell yourself how much of our listlessness and want of spiritual appetite proceeds from hence, that these outward things press continually very hard upon us, and make us feel that they have a being and a solid subsistence: but the other rarely touch us with any force, and so appear as if they were only in our fancy. Our soul seems to us, in our careless thoughts, as if it were but a breath or a thin vapour: but our body we perceive to be a massy bulk, of whose concerns we are therefore very apprehensive. The Divine Being, though the cause of all others, seems but like a shadow; on whom our soul having no fast hold, it is no wonder that we rather catch at those things which we can grasp, and feel to have some substance in them. The report of immortal life and bliss in heaven comes to us like a common story, of which there is some probability, but no certainty; and that inclines us to close so greedily with the enjoyments of this life, which make more strong impressions on our body than the other on our spirit. The glass through which we look upon this lower world makes every thing we desire appear exceeding great; nay, multiplies and increases it to vast dimensions: but when we cast our eyes upward towards our heavenly country, alas! things appear there (as if we had turned about the perspective) so little, so remote, so like nothing, that we can scarce discern them, or retain any remembrance of them. We have a kind

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of opinion and half persuasion concerning these inward and intellectual objects, but we have a sense and full apprehension of our outward enjoyments. Now though opinion may govern us, and we may follow it while there are no considerable impediments to oppose it, yet when any difficulty arises, or something crosses our way to which we stand very much affected, it will soon submit itself, and leave us to our new inclinations, because it is but an opinion. We must confirm our souls therefore in a full belief of those spiritual things, which thus differs from a bare opinion of them. The one is grounded only upon probable reasons, or on good reason but half considered and feebly assented unto, the other upon clear and manifest evidences, well digested and fully entertained. So that the one leaves us weak and wavering, because it leaves us half in and half out of the arms of truth; but the other makes us firm, constant and unmovable, because it puts us completely and entirely into its embraces.

At those times, then, which are so favourable as to let your mind be free and unclogged, spend some of your retired thoughts in the company of immaterial beings, and approach so near them that you even feel and handle them, and remain persuaded they are no less real than those which you see and hear and touch with your outward man. By which means they will infinitely more engage your affections and tie your heart unto them than any thing else can do, because of the vast disproportion which every one acknowledges (supposing their existence) between them and all that you love in this sensible world.

1. Think, first of all, that your body is but the clothes and garments of your soul, and that this indeed is the man: and undress yourself in your own thoughts; strip yourself of these robes, and conceive that you are only a naked spirit. This you can do; and thereby you will both make your soul think more of itself, and you will likewise plainly prove it is quite distinct from your body: in whose society though it live, yet is not of its lineage, but of another nature and original; for nothing can think itself not to be, since by its very thinking so it proves that it hath a being. But we can quite put off all

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thoughts that we have this body hanging about us; and the soul can think itself to be what now it is, though it look not through these eyes, nor speak with this tongue, nor write with these hands, nor have any other thing about it but its own thoughts: and therefore it is not such a thing as this body, but some better and more noble substance. It is that which tells you that you have a body. If you believe it, you have reason to believe withal that itself is some other being of more force and longer continuance; because you can now think you have cast off your body, and conceive it lying in the dust, your soul still remaining as it is, full of these and other such-like thoughts: but you can never think you have no soul, because even by that conception you prove that you have, and show yourself to be a thoughtful thing.

2. When you have thus, therefore, discoursed yourself into some feeling of your soul, think, in the next place, very seriously, that whatsoever you clearly apprehend by this, though it be perceived by none of your outward senses, yet is no less real and certain than what you use with them. Disbelieve your eyes, and think that your ears bring you a false report, rather than doubt of any thing which your mind doth plainly and distinctly perceive. Though you cannot but yield an assent to the relation which any of your senses make you, yet since the mind is the more excellent principle, and it hath a most certain existence, give the greatest credit to what it affirms, when none of them can afford you any evidence.

3. And then you will presently find that your mind asserts nothing so strongly as the being of a God, without whom it could not be. Persuade yourself therefore as confidently of him as you do of that which your eyes behold. Though your eyes see him not as they do the sun, yet say to yourself, My soul doth, which gives as sound an evidence on his behalf as my eyes do for the sun. That great light, and all the rest of those globes of fire which I see in the skies, declare him as clearly to my mind as they do themselves to my outward sense. I cannot think of them, nor of myself, nor of any thing else in this great world, but a Divine Being presents itself before me; by whose incomparable wisdom and almighty goodness they

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were at once produced, and set in this beautiful and useful order in which I behold them. Exhort yourself therefore to look about you as often for this end as you are apt to do for other little purposes, that you may see God in this goodly temple, which he hath built himself for his own glory. Set your soul in that Divine Presence which fills all things. Open your ears, listen to the wide world, and hear (as Gregory Nazianzen excellently speaks[c]) "that great and admirable preacher of his majesty." Is it possible, as Athanasius well reasons, to come into a great city, consisting of a multitude of inhabitants of different sorts, great and small, rich and poor, old and young, men, women and children, slaves, soldiers, and tradesmen, and to see all things ordered so handsomely, that every one of these, though opposite in their inclinations, agree and conspire together for the common good, the rich not grieving the poor, nor the strong oppressing the weak, nor the young rising up against the aged; can one possibly, I say, behold all this, and not conclude that there is a wise and powerful governor there, though we see him not, by whose authority they enjoy this happy concord? Why then should we not draw the same conclusion from the sight of this great world, composed of divers contrary beings, moving several ways, and to distant ends; but making as good harmony all together as "the various strings of a lute, whose sweet music coming to our ears proves there is some excellent artist (though hid from our eyes) by whom they are tuned and touched? Confusion is a sign of anarchy; but order demonstrates a governor[d]."

4. If then there be a God, and you feel yourself a being that can subsist and enjoy itself, if he please, without a body, excite in your soul a most passionate desire to be so happy, that when it quits the place of its present abode it may approach nearer to his blessed Majesty, and have a clearer sight of his surpassing glory. Put yourself in hope also that his divine goodness, which hath planted in you such strong inclinations, and filled you with such desires, will not let them

[c] Τὸν μέγαν καὶ θαυμαστὸν τῆς μεγαλειότητος αὐτοῦ κήρυκα.—Orat. 43. [ed. Ben. orat. 44. § 3. tom. i. p. 837 A.]

[d] [Athan.] Orat. contra Gentes. [§ 38. tom. i. p. 36.]

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want the pleasure of satisfaction. Look up above, and think that when your spirit shall take its flight from hence, there is some other company to entertain it in another world, whose acquaintance is far more desirable than the society of the dearest friend we have here, who, perhaps, as soon as he hath gained our love takes his leave of us, and goes his way thither. What comfort have we remaining in this, and other innumerable cases, but the hope of immortality? which is the only thing that can raise our spirit above the pleasures and the troubles too of this mortal body. This is our chiefest good on which we should set our heart. This is the inheritance to which we are born, (as Lactantius speaks,) and for which we are formed by virtue and piety; the only inheritance of which we can be secure that we shall never be defeated. For all this world we must leave behind us: we can carry nothing away with us but an innocent and well-passed life, and the hopes which accompany it. "He only comes to God rich and plentiful, and abounding in wealth, (as his words are,) whom continence, mercy, patience, charity, and faith shall attend and convey into his presence."

5. To assure yourself therefore of this great good, on which our principal strength and comfort relies, consider, in the next place, that your mind plainly tells you (and its testimony is indubitable) that God must needs be true, and that whatsoever he saith ought immediately, without any hesitation, to be firmly believed. For as he can never be deceived himself, so we are sure he cannot deceive us.

6. Now God hath been pleased at last to speak to us by his own dear Son, as a voice from heaven and a world of mighty deeds have testified.

7. And seeing Jesus hath not only comprised in his doctrine all the holy wisdom and all the goodness that ever was thought or spoken of since the beginning of time, but hath likewise added a lively discovery of that state of good things which the heart of man naturally wishes and longs for in another world:

8. And seeing, in the last place, God hath confirmed his exceeding great and precious promises of eternal life by his

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resurrection from the dead, and his ascension into heaven, and the sending of the Holy Ghost; you ought to persuade yourself of the truth of these invisible things, and represent them so often to your mind till they seem no less real and certain than what you see with your eyes and feel with your hands; nay, till all the pleasures and delights which the bounty of heaven gives you in friends, or any other good things here, seem but as shadows and faint images of the better enjoyments which you expect hereafter. Those wise men who were guided only by the light of their own mind made no greater account of them; and yet all the philosophers of greatest fame were but little children, compared with Christian people, in the knowledge of this great point; as Eusebius justly glories [e]. "We are not left to gather this truth (as another of the ancients speaks) from the weak conjectures and imperfect reasonings of our own mind, but we know it from a divine tradition [f]." It is delivered to us by the Son of God, who hath put an end to all disputes by coming from heaven to us with the words of eternal life. Lay up his words therefore most carefully in your heart; let them dwell richly and plentifully in you in all wisdom, and possess you at once with a mighty sense of God, and of the dignity of your soul, and of immortality, and of the joy of the invisible world.

The benefits of this exercise are so evident, that I may leave you to relate them when you have felt them. It will be sufficient for me to suggest to you, that the heart must needs become by this means very cold and dead to those earthly enjoyments which were wont to bewitch and enchant it with their deceitful pleasures. If the soul be clothed (as the Platonists fancied) with as many garments as there are elements, through which it passed as it descended into this body, and if it be so muffled in them that it doth but fumble in its thoughts, and hath much ado to feel itself; hereby it will be able in some measure to divest itself of those thick blankets wherein it is wrapped, and throw off those heavy coats that dangle about its heels and encumber its motions, as it sets its feet forward to walk toward the Father of its being. It is no contemptible discourse which their master makes concerning felicity; which he

[e] Lib. i. Præpar. cap. 4. [p. 9 D.]
[f] Lactant. Inst. Div. lib. vii. cap. 8. [p. 538.]

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rightly places in the contemplation and love of the sovereign good ε: how that no man can attain unto it in this life, by reason of the lumpish matter to which the soul is fast tied, and by reason of the multitude of worldly affairs which require our attendance; yea, and of the fancies and toys that will fill our thoughts, do what we can. Whence he concludes, that either no man shall be happy (which he thinks is very absurdly affirmed), or he must arrive at his happiness after he is dead. And if when we are dead (saith he), the blessed time is come wherein we may enjoy as we would that greatest good; then the nearer any man approaches unto death, the nearer he comes within the reach of his felicity. If a man therefore will withdraw himself from the world, if he will abstract his mind from sensible things, and take his heart from bodily pleasures, and turn himself into himself, (which they judged, as the holy writers do, a kind of death), he shall be in the beginnings of his happiness. There I know, my friend, you desire to find yourself; and for that cause, I pray you learn thus to steal out of the company of worldly things, which by hindering us from beginning our happiness, would keep us in perpetual misery. Converse, as often as you can, with your nobler self; and contract an intimate acquaintance with those divine inhabitants which are lodged there. Grow into an high esteem of that unseen power, which knows God and the life to come; which thinks, and guides, and gives orders, desires, and loves, and doth all things else belonging to this life. And, calling to mind continually its worth and dignity, and considering for what heavenly enjoyments it was designed, disdain to let it be condemned to so base a slavery as to serve the body only, and make provision for its lusts and pleasures. Rescue it from that thraldom, and assert its liberty: which is no such difficult undertaking; since rightly to understand itself, is sufficient for its safety and preservation.

And, to say the truth, the necessity of this exercise is no less apparent than the benefit. We had need acquaint ourselves thoroughly with those spiritual and heavenly beings, and make them very familiar to us; because these outward objects are so near us, and have gained such an interest in us, that, even

ε Plato in Phædone. [p. 84 A.]

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when we are thinking of the other, they will busily interpose themselves, and are able in an instant to obtrude their company, though then very troublesome, upon us. How oft do our minds turn aside to speak with them, in the midst of our prayers! How will our thoughts be discomposed at the sound of a bell, the creeking of a door, the buzzing of a fly, or some such weak and contemptible thing, that affects our senses! When we are bowed down before God, when our hands and eyes are lifted up to heaven, how doth the memory of yesterday's enjoyments, or the fear of to-morrow's troubles, (besides the thoughts of the present day's business), start up and interrupt us, we know not how, or on what occasion! The uneasiness of our bended joints, the biting of a flea, the prick of a pin, some word which we then speak, any fancy that rises up by the natural motion of our spirits, will trouble our minds in our devotion, and carry us away from God. It concerns us therefore very highly to work our minds into a stronger and more delightful sense of him and of all spiritual enjoyments; since our familiarity with the other is so intimate, that the very least of them is in favour enough with us, to give us an avocation from this better company, even when we are engaged in it.

In order to this, and all things else, you know very well how necessary it is to implore the assistance of God's grace, and to beseech his infinite goodness, that he will be pleased to represent himself, more clearly than you can do, unto your mind; and lift it up above toward the happiness of the other world: which you may do in some such words as these.

A PRAYER.

O God, I believe that thou art, and that nothing could have been without thee: who fillest all things, and art every where to be seen and felt by observant minds, who diligently seek thee. Vouchsafe, I most humbly beseech thee, to behold a soul that seriously aspires towards thee, and whom thou hast already filled with earnest desires to be united in eternal love to thee; but is pulled down, alas! by this earthly body, and in danger to sink, without thy mighty aids, into too great a love of these lower goods, which here surround me. Draw near, O Father of Spirits; present thyself so clearly to me, and touch my mind with such a powerful sense of thee, that it may

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be lifted up above all earthly things; and my heart may always incline towards thee, and be possessed with a constant and most ardent love of thee.

Awaken in me, on all occasions, a lively remembrance of the worth and dignity of that immortal spirit which thou hast breathed into me; and raise it up to as lively a belief and hope of that eternal bliss, into which Jesus our Lord is entered for us. Fix my mind upon that unseen felicity, and keep it in such a steadfast and delightful contemplation of it, that nothing here on earth may be able to tempt me down into an inordinate desire after it, and love unto it. O what glorious objects appear before me, (surpassing all that ever mine eyes beheld,) now that my thoughts are retired a little from this outward world! O what shadows do all things here seem, in compare with those heavenly enjoyments which thou presentest to me! What longings do I feel excited in my heart after thee! What desires to be always with thee, and to be filled still with a stronger sense of thee! O thou who art the beginner and finisher of all good, be pleased to assist my holy endeavours to withdraw my mind more and more from these sensible things, that it may have a clearer sight of its heavenly country from whence it comes, and whither it desires to return, and there live for ever. Preserve it thereby from the power of all temptations here; and enable me to prepare it, to be presented unto thee by my Saviour, adorned with that faith, purity, patience, righteousness, mercy, and such-like heavenly qualities, as will dispose me for the company of the blessed.

I sigh to think, O my God, of the weakness of my mind, which is so easily distracted and turned aside in these my addresses to thee. Pity me, good Lord; and knit my thoughts and affections to a closer attendance on thee. Help me to gather my mind into itself, and there to enjoy the divine presence with less disturbance from this outward world. O that all things here may rather bring thee to my mind than carry it away from thee! Dispose me so to observe the footsteps of thy wise and mighty goodness in all thy creatures, that I may perpetually acknowledge thee; and then especially be borne away far above all other things, in high admiration of thee, and fervent affection to thee, when I am thus prostrate in humble adoration of thy divine Majesty. And when I am so feeble, as to wander after little things, even while I am presenting myself before thee, and offering my heart to thee; help me to long the more earnestly after that happy state, wherein I shall with more steady thoughts and entire devotion give everlasting praises to thee. Amen.

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SECT. II.

Now, that you may the better preserve in your soul these ardent desires, and that they may not die for want of continual fuel to feed and nourish them, let me advise you, my friend, in the next place, to represent to yourself, as often and as sensibly as you can, the incomparable greatness of that invisible happiness in the world to come. In which that I may assist you as much as I am able, I will direct you to such an easy way of managing your thoughts, that you may pursue this counsel with no great pains and labour. Justin Martyr observes, in his dialogue with Trypho the Jew[i], that therefore God laid such restraints upon that nation, and forbad them, for instance, the use of certain meats, the oftener to put them in mind of himself, even in the most common actions of human life; and to make them remember they were under his government, and subject to his supreme authority, which they were too prone to forget. And will it not be a great shame, if in these riper ages of the world the free use that God hath given us of all things should not teach us as much as those restraints and abridgments of their liberty did them, in the infancy of Divine knowledge? Ill natures are taught most by their wants, but the good are best instructed by their enjoyments. Ingrateful people think of God when he takes away his blessings from them, but ingenuous and thankful minds have a great regard to him when his favours are in their hands. Nor do they only think it a duty, but feel it a pleasure, to reflect on the bounty of their great Benefactor, which endears the practice of it, and makes it still both more facile and more frequent. Insomuch that in the use of all these outward and carnal things, a pious heart may soon learn to turn its thoughts and raise up its affections to a more spiritual good and nobler fruitions. Do you not observe how the Holy Ghost is wont to express the joys of the world to come by such pleasures as are most acceptable to us here? What is the reason of it, if it be not in compassion to the weakness of our apprehensions; and to let us see that all bodily delights administer occasion for pious thoughts, and holy desires after diviner

[i] [§ 20. p. 119 C.]

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enjoyments? God would preserve us from sinking into a fleshly sense by our daily conversation with and use of fleshly things. He shows us how we may lift up our minds, even by those things which are apt to depress them; and take an advantage from these inferior comforts to climb up towards those higher satisfactions. Hence it is that the happy enjoyments of the other world are compared so often to the pleasures of eating and drinking, whereby our hunger and thirst is assuaged, and our bodily life supported. Yea, to a feast, which is a more liberal entertainment of that kind, and is the meaning of that phrase in the gospel which represents Lazarus carried by angels into Abraham's bosom; placed, that is, in the uppermost room at that heavenly feast, and treated as the noblest and most beloved guest. Yea, to a marriage-feast; which being a time of the greatest joy, men are wont to make the largest provision of good cheer, that their friends may rejoice together with them. And, lastly, to a marriage-feast made by a king; a royal entertainment, such as a monarch would make at the wedding of his son. All which may serve to provoke good minds to look up above such things as these, which are most enticing in this world, and to be so far from being swallowed up in sensual pleasures as to give themselves thereby a more lively taste of that excessive joy which God will impart unto them, when they shall live with him, and be feasted by him in his heavenly kingdom. The like benefit you may reap from all other things which you converse withal; and though the world will attract your thoughts to it, and employ a great many of your hours; yet you may draw at last something from thence which will pay you well for the time which you have spent upon it. As, for example, when you look about you, and behold the delightful objects wherewith you are environed on every side, which present themselves continually to your eyes, or your ears, or your taste, or other of your senses, you may think with yourself:—

1. If God have provided such a multitude of pleasant things for the entertainment of this poor body in this present life; what are the joys and delights which he hath prepared for my better part in the life which is to come? This is the world of bodies, the other of souls and spirits. Therefore if this little

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carcass, which is but as the grass of the field, be so well accommodated, if there be so many rare things in the earth, and the sea, and the air, for its refreshment and pleasure; what may I not expect hereafter for my mind in those celestial, those spacious regions which I see above? O the inconceivable felicity which is provided in the paradise of God, for this more wide and capacious spirit, which bears his own image, and, like himself, is to live for ever!

2. Again, you may think with yourself, if there be such pleasure to be found in a creature, O what is there then in the Creator of all? If the sight of the sun, the moon, the stars, and all the rest of the beauties of this world be so glorious; what will it be to see my God? to be filled with that wisdom which contrived, and with that goodness which produced this vast, this goodly and comely fabric? If the melodies of music be so charming; O what an ecstasy of joy will it cast me into, to hear God himself say, I love thee, I delight in thee for ever? If the love of a true friend do so much ravish and transport my spirit; what pleasure is it that I shall feel, when my soul shall love him as much as its most enlarged powers will enable it, and know how much I am beloved by him? There is a delicious meditation in St. Austin to this effect, who thus speaks to God in one of his confessions[k]. "I love thee, O my God; thou hast smitten my heart with thy word, and I have loved thee. Nay, the heavens and the earth, and all things contained therein, admonish me on every side that I should love thee; and they cease not to say the same to all men else, so that they are inexcusable if they do not love thee. But what do I love when I love thee? Not the beauty of a body, not the grace and comeliness of time, not the brightness of light, (and yet, O how friendly and agreeable is that to these eyes!) not the sweet melodies of well-composed songs, nor the fragrant odours of flowers, or unguents, or costly spices; not manna, not honey, not the embraces of the dearest and most lovely person: these are not the things that I love when I love my God. And yet I love a certain light, and a certain voice, and a certain grateful odour, and a certain food, and a

[k] Lib. x. cap. 6. [tom. i. col. 173.]

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kind of embracement when I love my God; the true light, the melody, the food, the satisfaction and the embracement of my inward man. Where that shines to my soul, which no place can contain; where that sounds, which no time can snatch away; where that scents, which no wind can disperse and scatter abroad; where I taste that which eating cannot diminish; where I cleave to that which no fulness, no satiety, can force away: this is that which I love when I love my God. And what is this? I asked the earth, and it said, I am not. I asked the sea, and the deeps, and all living creatures, and they answered, We are not thy God; look above us, and inquire after him, for here he is not. I asked the air, and all its inhabitants, yea, the heavens, the sun, moon, and stars; and they confessed, We are not him whom thy soul seeketh. And I spake to all things whatsoever that stand round about the gates of my flesh, saying, Ye tell me that ye are not my God, but tell me something of him. And they all cried out with a loud voice, He made us." Look therefore how great, how goodly, how glorious, how beautiful and pleasant we are; and he is incomparably more bright, more sweet, more harmonious, more filling and contenting than the whole world, which is but his creature.

And having thus a little raised up your mind above all things visible, you may proceed to a new meditation in this manner.

3. If a soul enclosed in this body can see and apprehend so much of God; O what a sight of him shall it have when it is freed from these chains! If, whilst we look out of these windows of sense, such a glorious majesty presents itself before us, in what an amazing splendour will the Divinity appear, when there is nothing to interpose between us and its incomparable beauty! If, whilst there are so many other things to employ our thoughts, he discover so much of himself to us, what will he do when we shall be alone with him, and, seeing face to face, shall know as we are known? Is it not a miracle to see so much light conveyed to us through so little a hole as that of the eye? to behold so much of the heaven and the earth at once, and such a company of beautiful objects crowding in to-

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gether at so narrow a passage without any disturbance or discomposure? "O what an admirable pleasure, then, (as Seneca[1] discourses with himself,) will the soul be surprised withal, when it shall come into the region of light! when it shall be all surrounded with this glorious body! when on every side, as we may conceive, it shall take in light, and be adorned and clothed with it as with a garment!" And may we not with greater reason meditate on this manner, when we think of God the Creator of light, and of all those goodly things which it discovers to us? Ought we not to say to ourselves, O what wisdom, what greatness, what riches of goodness is this, which shows itself in all his works of wonder! What a world of things hath he comprised in this one little being which calls itself man! whose mind is circumscribed, and yet extends itself beyond the limits of this sensible world! which remaining in this body, swiftly runs and takes its circuit, and views all creatures in heaven and earth! and united to these senses abstracts itself from them, and goes to the Father of spirits, whom it meets with every where! Is it thus active, thus busy, thus capacious and discerning, whilst it is thrust up in such a close and little room as this poor body? and shall it not be more vigorous, more piercing, more enlarged, when it is set at liberty from this imprisonment? It will then sure stretch itself to receive more of him; it will see him more clearly, and comprehend him more fully, and admire him with more improved and extended thoughts, and love him with a more ardent flame, and feel more of his wisdom, more of his goodness pressing in upon it, and filling of it with infinite joy and satisfaction.

4. Again, you may think with yourself, if God bestow so many goodly things even upon the wicked, then what shall be the portion of the just? Do not the worst of men possess great plenty of his blessings? Doth he not entertain them here with strange variety of delicious enjoyments? Are they not so liberally and abundantly provided for, that silver, and gold,

[1] ["Tunc animus noster habebit quod gratuletur sibi, quum emissus his tenebris, in quibus volutatur, non tenui visu clara prospexit, sed totum diem admiserit, et redditus cœlo suo fuerit, quum receperit locum, quem occupavit sorte nascendi."—Sen. Epist. lxxix.]

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and jewels are theirs? and all creatures in the earth and the air and the water are pressed for their service? O what treasures, what riches of glory, what excess of joy then will God confer on those who are most dear unto him! If he treat his enemies in this manner, how sumptuously will he entertain his friends! If he let such rebels live in a palace so stately, so richly furnished as this great world is, which he hath built for good and bad; what mansions, may we think, are those, which are peculiarly prepared for them who live in faithful obedience to him?

5. And think again, if God hath made this building wherein we dwell so sumptuous, though it be to continue but for a time, O how glorious are those mansions which are eternal in the heavens! if he hath bestowed so much cost on that which waxeth old, and shall vanish away, what are the ornaments of that which shall never decay? Is not this very mortal body which we inhabit very fearfully and wonderfully made? Is it not contrived with admirable art, and curiously wrought in the lowermost parts of this little world? O how beautiful then will that body be which is from heaven, and shall never be dissolved, but remain immortal there! With what lustre shall we shine when this vile body shall be changed, and made like to the glorious body of Christ our Lord!

6. And cannot you easily make yourself believe the inconceivable splendour of that place where God himself more particularly dwells, since he hath made for us so fair and goodly an habitation? Heaven, you know, is called his *dwelling-place;* and our blessed Lord calls it his *Father's house*, where there are many mansions for all his beloved ones. O how beautiful, how glorious, how full of majesty must this needs be; seeing we and other of his lower creatures live in a world which is so richly adorned, and so fairly beautified both above and beneath! Do you not see how the roof of this palace, (if I may so speak,) wherein we are, is all gilded with innumerable stars? how the floor of it is overlaid with wonderful variety of pleasant plants and lovely flowers? O how glistering, O how refulgent then is that place, may you think with yourself, in which the Lord of heaven and earth himself is

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pleased, in a special manner, to reside; where he keeps his court; where all the angels minister to him; where he shows the greatness of his glory, and where our blessed Saviour sits at the right hand of the throne of that Majesty on high!

7. And when was it that he brought you into this delightful dwelling, so rarely furnished and richly adorned? Was it not as soon as you were born, before you could know to whom you were beholden, or could give him any proof of your love and fidelity? Think with yourself then, and say, If God hath granted us such a world of good things by way of gift, O what is that which he will bestow when he shall come to reward? If before we do our duty to him, I mean, he is bountiful, nay, opens his hand so wide, and fills every living thing with good, though they cannot acknowledge him; what blessings will he pour forth, what liberality will he express when he comes to recompense our faithful services, and give us according to our works? For we see that gracious princes, who grant many immunities and privileges to their subjects, only because they are their subjects, do not fail to raise and advance their good and valiant subjects, who have performed some noble acts in their service, to eminent honours and high places. Now, since that which God will bestow in the life to come, though it be a free gift, yet is called a reward and recompense, praise, and commendation, you may well think it will be very illustrious, when you consider how rich in mercy he hath been to us before we could do any thing praiseworthy.

8. And you may consider again, how that excellent princes, when they give rewards, are not wont to have respect so much to the persons on whom they are conferred, (who may be but mean, and of low condition,) as to the greatness of their own persons, by whom they are bestowed, whom it doth not befit to give any thing mean and below the name and the authority which they bear. From whence you may conclude, how inconceivably great that reward will be which the Majesty of heaven and earth will honour us withal. If a prince do but send his charity to the poor, it is not like one of us, but like himself; and therefore such will the favours of God be, which he intends to deal to all his servants. Though they are but

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servants, though they are but unprofitable servants, and have done no more than was their duty to do, yet he will reward them like a king, like the King of all the world, like *the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords, who only hath immortality.* He will feast and entertain them suitably to the excellence of his own infinite Majesty, and not proportionably to the poverty of their persons or of their deserts.

9. For you may consider again, that it is the reward which the Lord Jesus hath received to give us, for all his pains, and tears, and sweat, and blood. It is the purchase of the blood of the Son of God, the recompense of his obedience to the death, and therefore must needs be of great and inestimable price.

10. Nay, it is the glory of Christ himself, the same happiness which he enjoys: according to his own words, *The glory which thou gavest me I have given them,* and *Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord:* and according to that of St. Paul, *We are heirs of God, coheirs with Christ Jesus;* who is gone into the heavens, as he told his apostles, *to prepare a place for us.* To prepare a place for us? you may say. How long will it be a fitting? When shall we come to it?

11. Truly, from thence you may take some estimate of it, by considering the time you must stay and wait till your happiness be completed; and that is till the day of his appearing again unto salvation. They are great things, which are long in preparing. And therefore the longer your life is *hid with Christ in God*[m], (as St. Paul speaks,) the more glorious will it appear when it shall be manifested. The longer your body sleeps in the dust, to the greater dignity shall it be raised. God will pay us (if I may so speak) principal and use, and all. The treasure multiplies the longer it lies in his hands. If he should give us our reward now, it could be but little; but it increases infinitely beyond all our thoughts by being deposited with him till the Lord Jesus shall come from heaven, with all his mighty angels, *to be admired in his saints, and glorified in all them that believe.*

12. And now in conclusion, think with yourself what a plea-

[m] [The early editions read 'God in Christ.']

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sure these short and little thoughts have given you; how delightful that minute is in which you have had a glance of your future happiness; and say to yourself, If a small taste be so sweet, O what will the full draughts be when he makes me drink of the rivers of his pleasure? Are not men of contemplation wondrously transported with some few discoveries which they have made of the secrets of nature? Are they not perpetually thirsting and seeking after more? Do they not spend their time and their estates in such inquiries, though they never hope to find out all? What would not these men give (were it in their power) if the earth, or any other part of this world, would reveal all the treasures that are hid in it? What a satisfaction would they esteem such a vast discovery when some little scraps of knowledge are so surprising! The same you may think of the other world; and raise your spirit, by such meditations as these, to expect an inconceivable joy when all the glory of that shall be opened which now darts such cheerful rays of light into your mind. *Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us,* saith St. John, *that we should be called the sons of God. Beloved, we are now the sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be. But we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.* What that will be we cannot tell; but we feel now how delicious it is to resemble him, though but a little, in his wisdom, in his goodness, in his love and charity, in his meekness and patience, and such like heavenly qualities: and if in a drop of honey that distills from above there be such sweetness, what satisfaction, what fulness of joy shall we find in an ocean of pleasure! If the morning star be so bright, then what is the sun itself in its greatest lustre? It is one of the meditations of St. Austin: "O God, if thou dost such great things for us in the prison, what wilt thou do for us in the palace? If thou grantest such solace in the day of our tears, what wilt thou give us on the day of our marriage?" When we shall not only behold Jesus in all his glory, but live with him, and live with him for ever, and receive the utmost effects of his mighty love, and be preferred to sit with him in heavenly places, and have a crown of righteousness set on our heads, which *he, the righteous Judge, will give to all those who love his appearing.*

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And is there not great reason, my friend, that we should love it, and set our hearts on this, as the most desirable good, which so far surpasses all others, that they have no power at all to tempt us from it, while we keep in mind its incomparable greatness? Persuade yourself therefore as strongly as you can, that Jesus lives; and that *because he lives you shall live also;* and that you shall live with him in inconceivable bliss, according to his gracious promises. Believe them heartily, fix them deeply in your mind, and by such arts as these represent to yourself, as sensibly as you can, how exceeding precious they are: for it is neither the certainty, nor the goodness, nor the greatness of any thing, but the lively faith which we have of it implanted in our souls, that will make us seek and labour for it. If our faith be superficial, we shall be no more moved by it than if it were a thing of little moment, or but a devised tale, and some idle fancy. You must settle in your soul therefore, I say again, an unmovable belief of Christ's great and precious promises, and present them to your heart, that it may be affected with them, and value them according to their worth. Then you will not be unwilling to do, nor backward to suffer any thing that he would have you. This will give you a great spirit and courage, and joy in both. You will take a great pleasure in godliness, which hath such a recompense of reward. Nay, all the afflictions of this present time will seem inconsiderable, in compare with the glory that shall be revealed. Can any heart think much to abstain a while from sinful pleasures, when he believes, nay, tastes the pleasures he shall shortly enjoy at God's right hand? Will not any covetous desires be content to be denied, when you see it is for a kingdom, and a crown of life? Of what should a soul be ambitious beside, whose desires are pitched upon so noble a good as honour, glory, and immortality with Christ? Who would not watch and pray unweariedly, that he may come to this celestial rest with the people of God? Can there be any higher pleasure, than to lift up our mind to our heavenly country, and to think of the happiness which there expects us? In what can we better spend our time, than in meditating of the great love of God, which hath prepared such excellent things for those that love him? It is a good thing sure to *give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto his high and holy name.*

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There can be no more delicious life than this, which will conclude in his everlasting praises. And suppose we must sometime take up a cross, where is the mischief of it, what should render it intolerable, if we *look at Jesus, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, and despising the shame is set down at the right hand of the throne of God?* From thence he stretches forth his hands to call us; there his arms are open to embrace us; and there he would gladly see us. Out of that glorious place he holds forth a crown of life to us, saying, Follow me, and let none of these things dismay you. Behold the majesty wherein I am enthroned; see the glory to which I am promoted; do not faint in your mind, nor be weary of well-doing, but *press on towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in me your Saviour.*

There is nothing sure can hinder us, or pull us back, unless we cease to *look at Jesus*, and turn away our ears from hearkening to his gracious voice. For do you not see what power a worldly faith hath over men's hearts? how fast one rides to take possession of an estate of which he hears he is left the heir? how another sails through dreadful dangers, because he believes he shall arrive at a rich country, which will send him home laden with precious commodities at the last? Why should we think then the Christian faith is less powerful, or fancy that we are in truth endued with it, unless our belief of the other world have the same effects? Let it lay its commands upon all the powers of our soul, and engage them to do their several works. Let it excite our minds, and our wills, and our affections, and our endeavours, to a constant pursuit of these heavenly enjoyments, that we may know indeed, that we *believe to the saving of the soul.* Look upon that faith which was built on weaker grounds, and lesser evidences, and darker promises. See how it wrought in Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and in the rest of the ancient patriarchs, whose belief of the word of God made them forsake their own countries, quit all their possessions when he required it, live as pilgrims and strangers in the earth, and depend merely on the love and care of his never failing providence. By faith they slighted the pleasures of kings' courts, the honour of a throne, and the riches of Egypt. *By faith they wrought righteousness, sub-*

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dued kingdoms, stopped the mouths of lions, endured all reproaches and afflictions, *would not accept of deliverance,* and life itself, *that they might obtain a better resurrection.* Now since the Christian belief relies upon better promises, a clearer revelation, and stronger grounds of hope, by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead; what a shame will it be, if we do nothing worthy the name of men, much less of the disciples of Christ, and of the sons of God? To what cause can it be imputed, but because there is no faith in the earth? or it rests only in the brain, and floats in the imagination, but never descends to touch the heart and affections? Bring it down then, my friend, and stir up yourself to a serious and affectionate belief of the life to come. Spare no pains to consider and lay to heart (that which is the greatest comfort of your life) all the glorious things which you read of in the gospel of God's grace; which Christ hath sealed by his blood, and God confirmed by his resurrection, and hath been attested by signs and wonders of the Holy Ghost, and by the life and death of a number of great souls, who have followed Jesus even to his cross, and declared their belief of those things, by sacrificing all that was dear unto them here, to win his favour in another world. Look often upon their constancy, upon their zeal, upon their contempt of riches and pleasures, and life itself, when it came in competition with the will of Christ; for whose sake they rejoiced that they were accounted worthy to suffer, especially since he had assured them their present troubles should work for them a *far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.* And then, in imitation of them, you will put on their resolution: and lifting up your eyes to heaven, will be moved to speak to this effect. "O blessed God, how much am I beholden to thee, that thou hast showed me such things as these! How much am I beholden to thee, that thou hast inclined my heart to make them my choice! I would not be as I was before for all the world. Away, you frivolous temptations, you vain delights, you unprofitable labours: never renew your importunities, for I will not hearken; I tell you, I will not listen to you any more. I am resolved to proceed in this holy course to the end of my days. You will but make me meditate the more, and pray the more, and lay to heart the more the love of my God: I shall but fix my eyes the more steadfastly

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on that blessed place where Jesus my Saviour is, at God's right hand. At his will I hold my riches, my honours, yea, and my life also. Let him dispose of them as he pleases. And let it please the Lord of life and glory to accept of this most hearty oblation which I make of all I have unto him. Let it please him to strengthen me in my holy resolutions, to open my eyes, that I may still see more of that wonderful love which he hath discovered in his gospel, and to accompany me with his grace, till I arrive at his heavenly court. O let his good Spirit breathe upon me, and carry away my soul in holy desires towards him. Let it guide my course through this troublesome sea wherein I am tossed: let it shine upon me, and prosper my endeavours: let it bring me safely to a quiet haven in eternal rest and peace."

These pious aspirations you may still pursue at the end of these meditations, in some such prayer as this.

A PRAYER.

I PRAISE thee, I magnify thy wise and mighty goodness, O Lord, who hast made this great world, the heavens and the earth, with all things contained therein, to the everlasting honour of thy name. I thank thee, with all my soul, for bringing me into it, and for advancing me so much above the rest of thy creatures here below, that I see the glory of thy Majesty shining every where, and hear thy name proclaimed and praised by all thy works of wonder. But above all I acknowledge thy bounty, with the most admiring thoughts, and the devoutest affections of my heart, for sending Jesus Christ upon earth, to open unto us the kingdom of heaven, and to show us the glories of another world. O the exceeding greatness of that love which gave him to die for us, and rewarded all his sufferings with a blessed resurrection, and then translated him to heaven, and appointed him heir of all things, and settled his throne for ever and ever on the right-hand of thy Majesty on high. From thence he hath sent the Holy Ghost, to be witness of the fulness of his royal power and love, and hath shown himself sometime in majesty and glory above the sun, when it shineth in its strength; that we might hope in thee for the like resurrection to a glorious immortality in the heavens. No tongue can utter, nor heart conceive, what honour, glory and peace, what joy and gladness of heart, thou hast

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prepared there for those that love thee. But blessed, for ever blessed be the riches of thy grace, whereby I understand so much, as to feel most earnest longings in my soul after a fuller sense of that, which thou hast made me taste and relish beyond all the pleasures of this life.

O raise and enlarge my spirit unto clearer and more comprehensive thoughts of that supreme blessedness. Thou who entertainest all thy creatures with so much liberality; who causest thy sun to shine upon the good and the bad, and the showers of heaven to fall on the just and the unjust; deny not to satisfy the pious desires of a soul, in whom thou hast excited an ardent thirst after its proper and eternal good. But enlighten the eyes of my understanding, that I may know more and more *what is the hope of thy heavenly calling, and what the riches of the glory of thy inheritance in the saints, and what the exceeding greatness of thy power to usward who believe, according to the working of thy mighty power, which wrought in Christ, when thou raisedst him from the dead, and set him at thy own right hand in the heavenly places.* O lift up my mind to that high and holy place, where thou dwellest, and where Jesus is enthroned, and where the angels and saints continually behold and praise, with joyful hearts, the majesty of thy glory, and where our Lord hath promised all the faithful shall live and reign with him for ever.

Help me to climb up daily by all thy creatures, on which thou hast set such marks of thy greatness, wisdom, and goodness, to the contemplation of that celestial bliss: and possess me with such a constant sense and desire of it, that nothing here may engage my heart, which will indispose me for the happy company and society of the blessed. Assist me, good Lord, by such meditations as these, to discern more and more the incomparable and surpassing greatness of that felicity, which thy royal bounty will bestow upon our advanced spirits and bodies, in the world of rewards and recompenses. Affect my heart more powerfully with it; and fill me with love and joy unspeakable and full of glory, when I turn my eyes towards it. Stir me up thereby to prepare myself with diligence and care, by a lively resemblance of the Lord Jesus, for the day of his appearing: and to wait with patience for that blessed hope, when I shall not *see, as now, through a glass darkly, but face to face*; and be made completely like him, by seeing him as he is. Enable me always to live upon this hope, and according to it; that growing in all goodness, by a cheerful obedience to his holy commands, I may be found of him in peace, and be so happy as to hear at last those gracious

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words of his: *Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.* Amen.

SECT. III.

I NEED say no more to excite one of your virtue to the frequent exercise of such meditations as these, which are no less delightful than they are useful. Let me next unto this advise you to study the truest notions of God and of religion; the love of which is the way to that transcendent bliss and happiness of which I have spoken. As you must believe things unseen, and persuade yourself thoroughly that they are; so it is necessary you should inform your mind aright what they are. And in particular look upon religion as a most pleasant thing, and represent it to yourself with a face as fair and beautiful as you can. If it seem cloudy, dark and melancholy, it will make you to be of the same complexion: but if it have a lovely and cheerful aspect, it will incline you always to smile upon it. The poor Norwegian, whom stories tell of, was afraid to touch roses, when he first saw them, for fear they should burn his fingers. He much wondered to see that trees (as he thought) should put forth flames and blossoms of fire: before which he held up his hands to warm himself, not daring to approach any nearer. But as he, you may be sure, was happily undeceived when he came not only to touch, but likewise to smell those innocent flowers, which seemed to burn in his eyes; so will it be with us, when we come rightly to understand and feel the pleasure that religion gives us; which at first sight, before we come acquainted with it, looks as if it intended to make us martyrs, but not to crown us with any joys or contentments. As the martyr said of the real fire, wherein he was covered, that it seemed to him as if it were a bed of roses; so shall we say of true religion, which we are afraid will scorch us, and prove too hot for us. Its flames are but the flames of love; and it makes us not lie down in sorrow, but in the most comfortable sense of the tender love of our dearest Lord.

Think with yourself therefore, when you go into your closet, and betake yourself to your private retirements, I am going

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to God, my exceeding joy, to my happiness, to my heart's delight. Welcome, beloved hour, which hast more of eternal life in thee than of time! Rejoice, my soul, that thou art among angels now, and not among men! Yea, let my flesh be glad to become, of a poor soul's cottage, the temple of the Most High God! Look upon prayer as that which brings down heaven to you; and upon praise and thanksgiving as that which lifts you up to heaven; and upon meditation as that which is the bond of the two worlds, and ties heaven and earth together. Yea, let every other good action seem a favour, rather than a charge; a recreation, rather than a work.

And then, for your notions of God, do not look upon him as a rigid and unmerciful exactor of your labours; but as a loving Father, who is easily pleased, and makes a most gracious allowance for your weaknesses and unavoidable impediments; and is ready to forgive you many oversights and frequent neglects. When we represent him to ourselves as exceeding angry at every little indisposition and dulness that seizes on us, that very thought makes us more dull and indisposed; because we imagine that we shall never be able to please him. Or if we deem him, though not implacable, yet much in love with revenge, and ready to strike upon every offence that we give him, I know no readier way to render his service a most tedious task unto us; because we shall go in perpetual fear of thunderbolts hanging over our heads, and ready to fall down to do some mischief or other to us. As we ought to have a great and scrupulous care to avoid all that is evil, so we must believe, when we commit a fault against our will and design, that there is an Advocate with our Father, who is a propitiation for our sins. And when we look upon him thus, as one ready to forgive, that had rather do us all good than any harm, and desires rather to see his commands better observed than the penalties for the breach of them inflicted; this will encourage us to address ourselves with a fresh cheerfulness to his service; and breed in our hearts a great love to him, which above all other things hath a most powerful hand upon our obedience.

The more you heighten your love to God, the more motion and activity will the heat of it give you: and the more you

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heighten his love to you, the greater flames will there arise in your heart to him. Just as you see the sun in its nearest approaches to us, when its beams are directly over our heads, produces a vigorous heat and life in all creatures; but when it is in the southern countries, and looks upon us with an oblique aspect, is not able to make us warm by its rays; so it is with the Divine goodness, which is the life and comfort of our hearts. If we think that he looks asquint upon us, and cares very little for us, we shall be cold and frozen, like so many dead creatures, in our affections to him; but if we think his face is towards us, and that his eye, and the light of his countenance (as the Scripture speaks) is full upon us, that he highly favours us, and his heart is very desirous to pour down a world of blessings into us; it will make our souls leap for joy, our love will spring up apace, and the odours of it will be like the smell of spices, sweet both to God and to ourselves. We love God commonly (if not always) in the beginning of our friendship with him, because of the good that he doth, or that we think he will do to us: and though afterward this breeds a strong inclination in us to love that most excellent nature from which all good comes, yet that inclination will still grow stronger by the continued thoughts of his kindness to us. And therefore this belief is by all means to be nourished and preserved in our hearts; especially considering that the stronger our love and inclination towards him grows by frequent reflecting upon his love and good will to us, the more cheerful and constant obedience shall we pay to him.

I have represented this so largely in another discourse, (which you know very well[a],) that it may seem unnecessary to add any thing to it here; but it will not be unprofitable, I am sure, to recommend to you this one consideration more:—that the hearty love of God (which naturally springs out of a steadfast and unmovable belief of his love to us) is a thing so comprehensive and so powerful, that it includes in it all the means which are necessary for the accomplishment of our end; and contains the force of all those rules, helps, and furtherances which are commonly prescribed for the better observing of God's commands. Let me instance in these five great exercises,

[a] [The Parable of the Pilgrim. See especially chaps. xi. and xxxvi.]

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to which you are often exhorted both in sermons and good books, for the preserving you in his obedience: first, to live as in God's sight: secondly, to pray continually: thirdly, to watch: fourthly, to depend on God for his assistance: and, fifthly, to look for his mercy to eternal life; and plainly show you that they are all comprehended in divine love, and cannot be separated from it.

1. For the first, it is well known that this passion is not wont to let the object on which it is fixed be absent from it; but at whatsoever distance it be removed, love brings it near, and sets it ever before the eyes of him to whom it is dear. And therefore, if our hearts be full of love to God, we cannot be without his presence, but shall live as in his sight: or, to speak in the language of David, we shall *set the Lord always before us*[a]. Whatsoever we do, we shall think of him; and consequently do it well and exactly: we shall study purity of heart, and the greatest clearness in our intentions, because he sees us, and penetrates into our secret thoughts. There is no more easy observation than this, that nothing makes a man so diligent, so curious, so circumspect, so decent and comely in all his behaviour as to be continually under the eye of one whom he loves, to whom he desires every way to approve himself. And it is as certain that ardent love makes a person ever present to us, and will not let us be divided from him.

When Phidias, the famous statuary, made the image of Jupiter Olympius, one of the goodliest that ever was, he could not forbear, but he must privately engrave upon his little finger the name of one whom he dearly loved, in these words, PANTARCES IS FAIR[b]. For it was not Jupiter (saith Clemens Alexandrinus, from whom I have this story,) who was fair in Phidias his eyes, but the youth whom he loved. The thoughts of his god could not put out of his mind the thoughts of him whom he loved better. If therefore we had such a love to God as others have to the things of this world, the thoughts of them could not quite thrust out the thoughts of him. But still we should be apt to write (if I may so speak) upon the very forehead of

[a] Ps. xvi. 8.

[b] Παντάρκης καλός.—[Clem. Alex. Cohort. ad Gent. p. 47.]

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every earthly good, God is most lovely: or, *God is my exceeding joy: the Lord is my portion: O how amiable are his courts!* or, as an holy man, (who, it is said, could never get these words out of his mouth,) "My God and all things[c]!" Where he is, there, in effect, are all things: and where his love dwells, there he will be sure to be. We shall meet him every where, see him in every beautiful thing, and taste him, before we have done, in all the delightful enjoyments of this life.

2. And as it comprehends in it the practice of making God present, (which some masters in divinity have said may serve instead of all other rules for the ordering of our life aright;) so it contains in it likewise the very spirit of prayer to God: which all acknowledge to be not only a great part of a godly life, but a great help and furtherance to us in all the rest of our Christian duty. If by prayer we understand, as some have explained it, the ascent, or raising up of the soul to God, it is love only which continually aspires towards him, and carries the heart aloft from other things to be joined to him. Or if we call it the converse of the soul with God, (which are the words of Gregory Nyssen,) or a holy conference and discourse with the Divine Majesty, (as it is termed by St. Chrysostom,) it is manifest the love of God includes this in it: for it is the nature of this passion to make us frequent the company of those whom we love. Their conversation is most welcome; their discourse delightful; we are exceedingly desirous to impart our mind to them; and especially to let them know how much we love them. For which purpose it needs not always the help of the tongue, but can frame a language of its own; and speak by the very countenance and the eyes, and make use of silence instead of words to declare its inclinations: according to the admirable expression of the Psalmist, who, setting forth the pious affections of the people to God their Deliverer, saith, *Praise is silent for thee, O God: in Sion* (so the Hebrew hath it, as your margin tells you) *to thee shall the vow be performed.* But let us take it simply for the desiring and requesting good things of God, and then we must needs

[c] ["Ecce Deus meus et omnia. Quid volo amplius, et quid felicius desiderare possum."—S. Thomas à Kempis, de Imit. Christi, lib. iii. cap. 34.]

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acknowledge, that love, being a passion full of desires, cannot but comprehend in it (as I said at first) the very spirit of prayer and supplication. You know how much we long for that to which we have given our hearts. And therefore, if they be devoted in love to GOD, we cannot choose but be ever breathing after more sensible apprehensions and tastes of him. So much as we love him, so much we shall thirst after a larger communication of his Divine grace to us. It will make us sigh for more tokens of his favour; and wait for a greater power of his Holy Spirit; and vehemently long to be more transformed and changed into his image. What was it but this that made David say, *As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God*[c]*?* The chased deer in a great forest and in the midst of summer did not more long after the streams of water than this good man (being, it is likely, in the wilderness of Judah, and so denied the favour of going to the tabernacle of God,) did ardently desire the happiness which there he had sometime tasted in the Divine presence. He opens his mouth and pants after this with a thirst so vehement, that it makes him cry out in the following words, *O when shall I come and appear before God?* It is the heat of that creature (to whose pantings David compares the longings of his soul) which is the cause of its thirst; and that being a constant desire, which goes not off by continuance, as many inconveniences do, but rather more increases, it bears the greater resemblance to this divine passion of love, whose fervours and ardent longings are perpetual, and do not abate by length of time, but grow still greater and greater. There is nothing so likely as this to enable us to fulfil that exhortation of the apostle, *Pray without ceasing*, and to make us importunate and unwearied in it; which are the two qualifications our Saviour requires in our devout addresses to God: where you read a parable of his to this end, that *men ought always to pray, and not faint*[d]. It marvellously disposes us also for the Divine favour, by moving us to quit all that is inconsistent with our desires, in hope of that which we pray God to bestow upon us. There was a monarch, you have heard perhaps, who offered his kingdom for a cup of cold water in a time of extreme thirst. And therefore what is

[c] Ps. xlii. 1. [d] Luke xviii. 1.

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it which the heat of this heavenly affection will not make us resign to God and absolutely part withal, that it may obtain its petitions, and have its desires satisfied? Besides, it hath one wonderful power in it (which nothing else can furnish us withal) to make our prayers prevalent; and that is by fixing our thoughts and fastening our minds to the business which we are about. For love, you know, doth not willingly stir from the object to which it is devoted. It is this flame which keeps our heart close to the holy sacrifice, and will not easily suffer us to wander from the gate of heaven. It sets us in the presence of God; it keeps our eye upon him; it makes us converse attentively with him; and while the power of it lasts, our very hearts are tied to him, and cannot go aside from him. But as soon as ever it begins to die or decay, then it is that the mind steals away, and gads about the world, till this flame revive again, and make us fly back to the altar of God. The best soul that is, I confess, may feel some looseness and distraction of spirit (especially at some untoward season); some ashes may dim and dull the fire; but yet this love and ardent desire will keep the greater part of our thoughts together, and knit our heart so to our duty, that there shall be no long nor wide breaches in it; but it shall still be strong, and fervent, and effectual with our heavenly Father.

Thus you see how wisely these two are joined together by St. Jude; who, after he had exhorted the faithful to *pray in the Holy Ghost*, immediately bids them *keep themselves in the love of God*[e]. There is nothing comparable to this, to inspire us with devout and earnest desires. And it hath an equal force also to excite us to praise and acknowledge our great Benefactor, who gives us so many good things, even before we desire them. Do you not see how men delight to commend, extol and magnify that they love? and how lavishly they are wont sometime to bestow those praises? There is not any thing in this world so excellent, but they will borrow a metaphor from it, wherewith to adorn their beloved. They go to the precious stones, and to the stars, nay to the sun itself, to fetch some lustre from them for their expressions. And more than this, it is usual with love (as every one may observe) to

[e] Jude 20.

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go beyond the nature and value of things, and to make those hyperboles not uncomely, which in other cases are ridiculous. And as for gratitude, we are all sensible that nothing is so acknowledging as love: every favour it esteems a treasure, and studies all means to express its resentments. So that if it become a divine passion, you may learn from king David how much it will dispose our hearts to admire and extol the perfections of God, and excite us to give him thanks, *because he is good, and his mercy endureth for ever.* Do but read the beginning of the 103rd Psalm, and observe how he calls up all the faculties of his soul to assist in this holy duty of praising and blessing the name of God. And then being conscious to himself of his own disability to offer him the praises that are due unto his great and glorious name, you may take notice how, in other places, he goes to all his friends, and begs of them that they would join in consort with him, saying, *O love the Lord, all ye his saints*[f]: and, *O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together*[g]. *Let Israel now say, that his mercy endureth for ever. Let the house of Aaron now say, that his mercy endureth for ever. Let them now that fear the Lord say, that his mercy endureth for ever. O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever*[h]. And lest all these should not be able to make this joyful sound loud enough, he invites all strangers to come, and help them to the discharge of this debt, saying, *O make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: and come before his presence with singing. O praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. For his merciful kindness is great towards us: and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. Praise the Lord*[i]. Yea, it is frequent with him to extend his entreaties to the angels, that they would lend him their help to acquit himself[k]: and he calls upon all the lower hosts of God, who are in the heavens nearer us, and in the earth also, that if they can do any thing, they would bear a part in his song of praise, which he composed in honour of him[l]. And in the very conclusion of his heavenly book, that he might say all he could, he thus bespeaks the voice of all things, which either by nature or art are framed

[f] Psalm xxxi. 23. [g] xxxiv. 3. [h] cxviii. 2–4, 29. [i] c. and cxvii. [k] ciii. 20. [l] cxlviii.

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for delight and pleasure; *Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord.* All which observations I thought good to annex to this discourse of the power of love in prayer, because, when we have said all we can, there is nothing so prevalent for a new favour as praising God, and being heartily thankful for the benefits we have already received. To which the love of God disposing us so effectually, that it never thinks it can praise or acknowledge him enough, it must needs obtain much of the Divine grace for us, and consequently secure our obedience to him above all other things. Especially since,

3. Love is ever watchful: which is another means, to be joined with prayer, to keep us from entering into temptation. It always hath its light burning, and its loins girded. It is ready and forward to apprehend and embrace any occasion of serving him to whom it is engaged. It is jealous of every thing which would rob it of that good which it ardently desires: and therefore hath its eyes always open, and, by reason of its heat, will not easily fall asleep; nor suffer that dulness and weariness to infest it, wherewith others are usually surprised. I need not pursue this argument any further, it being so apparent that fervent love and affection chases away all drowsiness of spirit, and makes a man slip no opportunity to do that which is pleasing in the eyes of God. And I am the more willing to quit it, because I have been so long in the former, and have two other considerations still to add.

4. One of them is, (which I shall but briefly touch,) that it will breed in us a pious confidence of the succours of God's Holy Spirit, in the power of which we shall be able to undertake any thing that he commands. It is impossible to have any heart to do well, if we have not this hope rooted in us; and it is as impossible to doubt of it, if we feel the love of God burning in our hearts: which is both a testimony of his divine power already working in us, and an argument that he is as willing to do any thing further for us as we find thereby that we are to do any thing for him. It doth not only widen the heart to impart, but also to receive: and the very same motion which carries it out towards God and towards others in sincere affection brings home large assurances that he will abundantly

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communicate himself to it on all occasions, for the encouraging and assisting of its faithful endeavours to do his will in every thing.

5. The other is this, (which shall put an end to this part of my discourse,) that it hath no less power to make us fully assured, both of the blessed rewards I spoke of in the other world, and of the greatness of them, which are the strongest motives to our obedience. There is nothing so sharpens the sight to discern, or enlarges the heart to conceive the things of God, as this doth. For *God is love*, as St. John tells us[m], *and therefore he that dwells in love dwells in God, and God in him.* Among all the goods of this world, we find nowhere such repose and quiet, as in hearty love and true friendship. Nothing gives us such a taste of pleasure, and, if the object be worthy, such satisfaction. Of two it makes one, so that they communicate in each other's happiness. And this satisfaction is wont to make them forget all other things at that instant: for love is of such a nature, that it endeavours to take up all the room in the heart, and would leave none for any thing else, that it may be entirely and wholly possessed of that which it loves. And therefore when it is turned towards God, and settles itself in him, it must needs give us a lively sense of future bliss, by uniting our hearts, and gathering up our minds (as I may speak) wholly unto it. It participates with that supreme good to which it is united. It carries in itself a great deal of the life of God; it is a part of heaven, and the business of the other world. But besides the solace which is inseparable from it, there is this remarkable property in the passion of love; that it strangely disposes us to believe all the kind expressions of our friends, and makes us easily receive whatever they say for certain truth. Upon which account the love of God will incline us, above all other things, to entertain everything that he shall communicate of his mind unto us. And there is nothing so great, nothing so magnificent declared in the gospel of his grace, but he that loves God will presently believe it, and lay it up in his heart, as a singular expression of his divine favour. For he feels, by the power and force of this

[m] 1 John iv. 16.

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affection in his own heart, what God is inclined to do for those whom he loves and takes delight in, though it seem incredible to other men. And therefore, as it doth not pose his belief who loves God, when he hears that the *Word was made flesh* for the good of men; that *the fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily in Jesus;* that he died for sinners, and laid down his life for the redemption of enemies: so the resurrection of Christ from the dead, his ascension to heaven, the exaltation of our nature in his person at God's right hand, the glory and majesty in which he is said to shine there, and in which we are told we shall at last appear together with him, are no riddles nor incredible things to him. No; love sees him there preparing a place for us, making all ready for the joyful marriage to be celebrated in his glorious kingdom, coming in the clouds of heaven to call us up thither, and to advance all his subjects to reign, as so many kings, together with him. This makes a man presently understand how God should design to reward our poor endeavours (those services to which we stand obliged, though but weakly performed) with an everlasting inheritance: how he should compensate our present sufferings, *which are but for a moment*, and not worthy to be named, with *a far more exceeding eternal weight of glory*[n]. Hyperboles go down easily with this man's faith. He can believe beyond them all, and see what is far beyond, that *far more exceeding eternal weight of glory*, as the apostle's words import. He is assured the love of heaven will enkindle a new life in our dead ashes. He beholds it sublimating this earth to an heavenly state: and can well conceive this thick clay shining as the sun, and made like to the glorious body of Christ: this soul also, as pure as the light, saluting its new-born body, and, possessed with a mighty love, rejoicing for ever in God's bounteous kindness to it. All this it sees, nay feels; being already filled, as St. Paul speaks, *with all the fulness of God*. For it feeling, first, what a vast difference there is between itself now, and what it was before, when it was pent up in scant and narrow affection to these petty goods here below, makes no doubt there may be as wide a difference between what it shall be hereafter, and what it is now. It presently concludes, that the same powerful

[n] 2 Cor. iv. 17.

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goodness which roused up and called forth its sleepy thoughts and drowsy desires towards itself, can still further awaken and raise all its faculties to a more quick and lively sense; or call forth some hidden power and virtue in the soul, which hath as yet no more appeared, than these motions which now it feels did before it was touched by his almighty hand. And, secondly, finding its own nature by this touch of the divine love made so free and benign, so abundant and overflowing in kind affection to others, so openhearted and gracious, it concludes that the almighty Goodness not only can but will do more for it; and confidently expects to be lifted up to an higher state of bliss, proportionable to the superabundant kindness of that most excellent nature, which hath produced already such good inclinations to it. It is impossible for a man to be under the power of love, to feel the huge force of its flames, to perceive of what a spreading and communicative nature it is, and not conceive very magnificently of the bounty of God, and have a faith in him as large and capacious as his love.

Love God therefore, my friend, as much as ever you can, with the greatest passion and most ardent affection; and you shall find heaven coming apace into you, and taste the good things of the promised world to come. You shall not only guess at your future state, and make conjectures about it, but in some measure know and feel the all-filling joy of our Lord, and possess that quiet, tranquillity, and peace, which passeth all understanding. For this divine love is the right sense whereby heavenly things are apprehended. It is that which fits the mind rightly to understand, and the will firmly to believe, those great and transcendent things which the Scripture reports as the portion of the saints in light. It gives us a sight of things as much differing from all other, which we have merely by dry reasoning, and which we spin out by thoughtful discourses, as the sight of a great beauty before our eyes differs from the description of it which we read in a book; or as the warmth of fire on the hearth doth from that we see in a picture, which cannot loosen and enliven our stark and benumbed joints. And if you would love God, I have told you the ready way to it; which is by preserving in your mind a constant and lively sense of his infinite love and good-will already expressed

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to you: for this will naturally and easily produce a reciprocal love to him; and that will make you look for more of his mercy, even to eternal life. This you understand so well, that I shall not say a word to you more about it; but proceed to the next, when I have left a few words with you to say to God.

A PRAYER.

O God, how great is thy love! how excellent is thy loving-kindness towards us thy unworthy creatures! to whom thou takest such pleasure in communicating thy blessings, that thou dost not stay till we ask them of thee, but pourest them down plentifully before and beyond all our desires. O the inconceivable depth of that love, from whence thy Son Jesus was sent to dwell among us! who hath done so much for us, that he hath left us nothing to do but to consider and lay to heart thy love, which hath so marvellously abounded towards us. For all things, I know, are easy and pleasant to those that love thee. *Great peace have they that love thy law; and nothing shall offend them.* O possess this heart, which opens itself to thy gracious influences, with such a mighty love to thee, as may set thee alway before me; and carry forth my soul in ardent desires after thee; and fill me with an humble confidence in thee; and make me watchful, active, and zealous in my duty; and never suffer me to distrust thy pity and indulgence when I unwillingly offend thee; and assure me of thy kind intentions in all the cross accidents of this life which are most offensive to me.

I doubt not, O Lord, of a power from above continually to attend me, now that I feel thy love so strong and powerful in me. I believe thou wilt do more for me, both here and eternally, than heart can conceive. O how great things hast thou laid up for those that fear thee! O the height of that joy which thou hast set before us, to encourage us in our Christian race! O the comfort of those gracious words which promise us, after our short pains and trouble here, *a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory!* How pleasant is it to wait for thy Son Jesus from heaven, to give a crown of righteousness to me, and to all those that love his appearing! Preserve, I beseech thee, this holy love and faith most fresh and lively in my heart, to my great increase in all the fruits of righteousness, *which are by Christ Jesus unto thy glory and praise.* Maintain in me such cheerful thoughts of thee, that religion may be my delight as much as it is my duty; and I may alway approach unto thee with a joyful heart, being glad to leave the company of all other things to go to thee, my God, my exceeding joy. Reconcile me so perfectly to

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every other part of my Christian duty, that all the actions of an holy life may be but so many motions of hearty love to thee; and I may so feel the ease and satisfaction of all well-doing as to love and delight the more in thee, *whose ways are ways of pleasantness, and all whose paths are peace.*

I am sensible of the uncertainty of all things else but only of thy love, which will inspire me, I hope, to behave myself worthy of the greatness of it in every state and condition of life. O that in prosperity I may think I have an opportunity to show how much I love thee above the world, by exercising humility, heavenly-mindedness, charity, temperance, and purity; and in adversity, how much I love thee more than myself, by expressing all patience, meekness, forgiveness of others, cheerful submission to thee, and confidence in thee, with thankfulness for all thy past and remaining mercies. Be they always acknowledged, and never forgotten by me. For which end I again consecrate my soul to be thy holy temple, wherein may dwell continually pious and religious thoughts; devout meditations of thee, and remembrance of thy loving-kindness; entire love to thee, sending up perpetual hymns of praise and thanksgiving, together with the constant sacrifice of an humble and obedient heart: that so I may be filled with the comfort and joy of the Holy Ghost at present; and hereafter be admitted into the fellowship of saints and angels, with them to rejoice and praise thee, in fulness of love, world without end. Amen.

SECT. IV.

But as I would have you exceedingly in love with religion, so I must advise you not to charge yourself with too many or too long exercises of devotion: for honey itself will cloy us, and a perpetual scent of roses may become offensive to us. Observe therefore what you can do with ease and a pleasantness of spirit; and when you find yourself to be free and forward, then you may be the longer and more enlarged in your devotions: but when you are very heavy and straitened, then it is not fit to tire your spirits, and drag them along with you whither they have no strength to accompany you, nor any disposition to comply with your desires. Our body is such a beast, and sometimes so dull and restive, that if we spur it on to a faster pace, it not only quite tires, but will have no list to travel any more: whereas if we bait it a while, and suffer it to

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take some repast, and give it some rest, it will go along with us to the end of our journey. When our spirits are dull already, we make them more dull by our restless importunity to do as we would have them: as a child, you may have observed, when he cannot think of his lesson, the more his teacher chides and calls upon him, the more blockishly he stands, and the further it is beat out of his memory; so it is very frequently with the natural spirits of every one of us. They are so oppressed and stupid at certain seasons, that if we labour to set them in motion, it doth but dispose them the more to stand stock still. But if we let them alone, and for that time leave them, they will be like the same child, who in a short time comes to himself, and is able to say his lesson perfectly: they will go whither we would have them, and perhaps run before us.

We must do then with ourselves, as one that is weak, and going up an high and steep hill. When he feels his legs begin to fail him, and complain that they are weary, he rests a while and sits him down to recruit himself. And it will not be long before he hear his mind calling on him, to try if he hath not gathered some new strength, with which he marches a little further, according as it will carry him. And if he hath any cordial spirits in his pocket, a little taste of them may much revive him in this languishing condition: yea, the pleasant prospect of the fields round about him, and the various objects that gratefully entertain his eyes, if he cast them on every side, will be a fit divertisement for his mind, to turn it from thinking of his weariness. Thus I say, my friend, it is advisable for you to do; rest yourself a while, and make a pause, when you perceive your spirits begin to flag. Break your devotions into little parts, and take not the journey you have set yourself all at once. When your mind tells you that now you are better able, or prompts you to try your strength, then up again and go forward. And between whiles turn your mind aside to something or other that is wont to please you much. Think of some good friend, of the many fair accommodations that God hath afforded you, of the pleasant meadows (as I may call them) and the still waters by which he leads you; or betake yourself to some divine promise, and take a taste of the

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love of God contained therein, which is as a cordial to cheer and refresh the spirits; or run to the extract or quintessence that you have drawn (as I shall direct you anon) out of former meditations: and some of these, it is possible, may make you quite forget that you were faint and weary.

And truly, for the most part, I think it is best not to be over-long in your devotions. I have heard of a very good man who was wont to pray to God that he would forgive him his long prayers: which, though they proceeded from an honest zeal, yet wanted their efficacy by being indiscreetly tedious. For whilst men study to stretch and wiredraw their meditations to the utmost length, what they gain that way they lose another, having the less of strength and solidity the more they have of length. No metal, you know, is more massy and ponderous than gold; yet it may be beaten so thin, that it may be blown away with one's breath, or broken with the least touch of one's finger. So many times it is with our devotions, which have some weight and force in them, if they be contracted and gathered into a little room; but while we spread them, and beat them out to a tedious length, they become so thin and weak, that every object which stirs blows away our thoughts; and great breaches are made in them by the least imagination that thrusts in itself upon them.

This is capable to be abused, I am well aware, by souls that are not truly pious; but those that are may as much abuse themselves, unless they understand and use it. Indeed, when the soul is very strong and full of heat, or when it is awakened by some remarkable stroke of Divine Providence, or when the mighty hand of the good Spirit of God is upon it, then it may and will let itself run without any cautions or restraints; and we shall have nothing to do but to follow those thoughts willingly, which in another case we could not persuade to follow our wills. Our mind, then, will run (as it were) before us, our hearts will be pregnant and teeming with many good meditations, which at another time we shall not be able to draw after us, nor make to conceive or bring forth one thought that pleases us. But now you must take great heed, lest at this or any other such happy time you think to attain presently to

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the perfection you desire. Alas! my friend, it is a great way thither; and it cannot be safe to make too much haste, though you find yourself never so willing and forward. For many there are who, running full speed, have strained themselves by fetching too great a leap, and disabled their souls for some time after. And therefore run not yourself out of breath, from an eager desire to be at the very end of your race. Let fair and softly be your ordinary rule; though sometimes in a very smooth road, and when your spirits are brisk, you may make as much speed as you can for a little way. But we have seen several ride upon the spur, especially in the morning when they first set out, who have been left behind in the afternoon by those whom they seemed to have many miles overstripped. And therefore it is necessary counsel (to those chiefly who are beginners) to travel so in the Christian path as we hope we may be able to hold out, and not to be so fiery at first as to make us dread zeal, when there may be good use of it.

There is another thing so nearly related to this matter, that it would have challenged the next place in this discourse, did your necessities require it. And that is, to take heed you do not tire yourself with any one thing, for that will make you indisposed to all the rest. This I take to be good advice to myself, who ought to be cautious, lest by over-much study I so dull and blunt my spirits, that even devotion itself become irksome to me. And I doubt there are too many of the gentry and better rank who so dispirit themselves by some of their recreations, that they are fit for nothing but to lie down and sleep. But to such as you, I need only say, that you must not weary yourself with any one pious exercise. For I can tell by my employment that if I keep one author company so long that I grow weary of him, I shall have no mind to return in haste to him; and all others will find me more morose and indisposed for society with them.

Let me only add, that you will the better do this if you labour to understand the true reason why you do every thing, and mark the fittest occasions wherein it may be done. The difference between the grounds (as we speak) or reasons of our motions, and the occasions of them, is this. The former per-

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suade our will either to decline or to pursue something that appears either good or evil; and therefore the stronger the reasons and motives are, the more shall we be induced either to avoid or embrace what is before us. The latter is only the opportunity or season, the advantage of time or place, which doth not so properly move us to do a thing, as to do it now. Time and tide, we say, stays for no man; and because the opportunity doth not always happen, therefore it stirs up our soul (which is already engaged by some reason) to work more powerfully at this present than otherwise it would have done. So that if you understand not only good reasons for your actions, but mind also the occasions, you will be mightily inclined by the one always, and more mightily by the other at certain times.

To grow in knowledge and wisdom is exceeding necessary, not only because it presents us with great variety of things to entertain our mind withal, and makes religion more pleasant, and renders our soul more firm and strong, more solid and compact; but likewise because while we search into the reason of our actions, we shall discern whether the thing be only lawful, or it be convenient also and prudent, and withal necessary to be done. And accordingly we shall know how to make a proportionable allowance of our time and strength, and earnestness unto it. If the business be merely lawful, you will do it when you have nothing else to do. If it be necessary, you will give it a more certain and likewise a larger portion of your time and strength; and the very thought of its necessity will enforce you to it. And if it be judged, though not absolutely necessary, yet convenient, and more acceptable to God, if you perform it; then you will do it when you are best disposed, and in the fittest temper to do him that more pleasing service. And then, being possessed with an habitual love to God and to religion, upon such satisfactory reasons as you have propounded to yourself and well considered; the observing of the occasions, which either time, or place, or company, or such like circumstances present you to express it, must needs be a mighty awakening to your spirit, to bestir itself with all diligence in the improvement of such an advantage. And these occasions are therefore of such force to call up our endeavours, because we

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know that, as much may be done then which cannot be performed at another time, so they will not wait upon us and stay our leisure; and that, as they pass away, so we know not when they will come again. For May (as the proverb is) comes not every month: and a fit opportunity lies not in every lock of Time's head. And if there should, yet it is bald behind; and we cannot call back that which is gone, which may be better than will be presented to us again. And if we find by experience that these occasions do excite our souls, then the observing and embracing them will be an excellent means to keep us from dulness; because it is likely that God will favour us with more of them, when he sees that we use those well which he hath given us already.

But yet you ought to be cautious that this do not prove matter of scruple and perplexity to you, if you neglect an occasion, when you are otherwise necessarily employed. For both prudence and the forwardness of our affections, and every thing else, must give way to a real necessity: and of two necessary things, that seems to be most necessary in which we are already engaged. Make therefore a short address to God, and both comfort and quicken yourself, after this manner, when you are dull and indisposed, or otherwise apt to be perplexed upon such accounts as these.

A PRAYER.

O MY God; whose name is most excellent in all the earth, and ought to be celebrated with the highest and continual praises of men and angels. How happy are they whose minds are ever delighted in the thoughts of thee; and whose hearts constantly burn with ardent affection and devotion to thee! It is some satisfaction to think of that vehement love, wherewith the holy spirits above perpetually acknowledge thy bounty to them, to us, and to all thy creatures; and to feel myself desirous, if it were possible, to accompany them at all times, with the like affections of a most cheerful and joyful heart, in that heavenly employment. Accept, I most humbly beseech thy Divine goodness, of these sincere desires that thou hast wrought in me. Graciously accept of these pantings of my soul after a freer and more delightful converse with thee. And pity the great weakness and dulness of my nature, which will not

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permit such ardours of love to continue always, as by thy grace I sometimes feel in my heart towards thee. Pity, O pity! and take compassion upon me, when I am so heavy as not to be able to lift up mine eyes towards heaven; or when I move so slowly and faintly, as if I had no list to serve thee, in the works of piety, righteousness and charity. O that I may feel my spirit stirred with a greater zeal, and carried with stronger desires, at all other times, when I am better disposed for thy service: that then I may run the ways of thy commandments, when thou hast enlarged my heart.

And endue me likewise with prudence, equal to that uprightness and integrity of heart, which I hope I shall always carefully preserve: that I may neither neglect any occasion of exciting and expressing a most fervent love to thee; nor dispirit myself by an indiscreet heat and forwardness, to the performance of any part of my Christian duty. Dispose me but to be ever serious, resolved, steadfast, and watchful, to be always well or innocently employed, and to be still going on with continued and constant motions, to perfect holiness in thy fear; and I shall hope, by thine infinite grace, to finish my course at last with joy, and to arrive at the happiness of that blessed company, who, as they do thy commandments, hearkening to the voice of thy word, so they are not weary in their obedidience to thee; but with incessant praises and thanksgivings serve thee, world without end. Amen.

SECT. V.

You see already how necessary it is well to understand ourselves; and therefore, lest you should think the pleasures of religion to be other than they are, it will concern you, my friend, in the next place, to distinguish carefully between those consolations that are spiritual, and those that are sensible. For your receiving benefit by this rule, you must consider, that the spirit of man being (as I said) joined to a body, and made a member of this world, and yet belonging to another country, hath several sorts of faculties (which we call its upper and lower powers) whereby it converses with both. With the former, which are the mind, understanding, and will, it hath intercourse with God and invisible things, and is fitted to improve all lower objects to an heavenly end: with the other, which we call sense,

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imagination, and sensitive appetite, we can maintain acquaintance with nothing but this outward world. Or rather this one soul of man is fitted with capacities of such different kinds, that it can hold correspondence with God and the higher world, and likewise with the goods of the body in this world which is sensible to us.

Now such a friendship there is between the soul and the body, by reason of their nearness, and between the upper and lower faculties of the soul (if you so conceive of it) by reason, as I may call it, of their oneness; that they do mutual good offices for each other, when they are able. And as the soul lends such a great part of itself to serve the body's necessities; so the bodily spirits likewise are ready to assist the soul, in their better moods, to a freer pursuit of its own concernments, in its motion towards God and the things above. And more than this, the pleasures of the one redound to the other; what the soul doth for the body, returning upon the mind itself, and the bodily spirits likewise oft-times feeling the contentment of which the mind tasteth. Hence it is that by discreet use of bodily enjoyments, and due attendance to the outward man's moderate satisfaction, the spirits oft-times are made so mild and sweet, so cheerful and compliant, that the mind finds them more ready and forward to accompany it in the contemplation of diviner objects; and it serves itself the more, by serving the body for a while. And on the contrary part, when the mind converses with heavenly things, they so powerfully touch it, at certain seasons, that they make a motion there all over, even as far as the very skirts of its territories. The heart is glad, the spirits leap and dance for joy, and the very blood in our veins runs the smoother for it.

Now while we have this sensible delectation in the borders of our soul by the agitation of the animal spirits, to which the mind communicates its resentments; there is no part of us, but can be well content to accompany the mind in its devotions, and they will not be inclined to withdraw their attendance from these delightful services. But on the other side, if the mind (through incapacity, it is like, of the body to receive them) cannot impress its perceptions upon the spirits, nor make

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such a warmth and heat in them that they are pleased, and move delightfully; though it really hath no less of God in itself than it had before when they skipped for joy; yet now the body becomes like a lump of clay, and cannot endure to be drawn any longer to these holy duties. Yea, the soul itself (unless it duly consider) will begin hereat to be greatly dejected; and to have little list to that which gives so small contentment to it, as it is an inhabitant in flesh, and which makes its abode nothing pleasant and comfortable for the present.

But if, in this state, the mind recollect itself and consider, that, for its part, it doth what it did before, (though it doth not feel itself and perceive its power in the same manner,) and that it is not bound to produce these pleasurable motions in the lower man, and that they are more pleasing to us than unto God; it might presently have rational satisfaction and tranquillity in its own breast (which is the best of all other joys), and be persuaded to hold in its course, notwithstanding this seeming discouragement. And if the mind, by these or such like considerations, be induced to do as it was wont, then I cannot see but all its performances would be both more acceptable to God, and in the issue more delightful to itself.

For there is more strength of a man's reason and will in them, now that he wants that pleasing assistance which the body used to afford him in the doing of them. His love to God is the more fervent and unconquerable, in that it will not cease its motion towards him, though all things else fail it but only the force of its own inclination. He is not, in true understanding, more weak and feeble now, but a person of greater might and courage than he was before. He breaks through all difficulties, and will not suffer himself to be overborne by the great load that lies upon his spirits. I said just now, that the lower man, finding a delectation in God's service, might be well contented with it, if not desirous of those holy duties: and so the soul in doing them gave no great proof, at such a time, of the power and vigour of its own affections to them; because there was no impediment or reluctance in the other party. But when there is nothing but a sense of its duty to invite it, and all beside begin to withdraw their consent; then it is that it

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shows its resolution, and what it can do by itself. Then a man demonstrates his heart to be so set towards God, and to be so much in love with him, that he will please him, though he cannot please half of himself in what he doth in obedience to his commands.

And besides, by a right understanding of this that I have said, there may be some way perhaps found of recovering these sensible joys, which are so grateful to us that we never think we have enough of them. Either (1) by more preparing our mind, and labouring to work in it a deeper apprehension of what we go about; and if the fault be there, this will cure it. Or (2) by gratifying our outward man with some recreations and sensible goods that it is in love withal; whereby its spirits may be better cheered than they can be, for the present, with divine exercises. Seeing it cannot now have a good liking of that which the mind doth most desire, let the mind make no scruple to comply more freely with it, and entertain it with those innocent pleasures which agree best with its inclinations: and if the fault lie there, and arise from its lumpishness, this may be a remedy for it. Or (3) by using humiliations of the body, by abstinence and fasting (if through too much fulness it be indisposed), or by smiting on our breast, casting down ourselves on our face (if through too strong a taste of earthly joys it be grown untractable); and if the fault be partly in the mind, and partly in the body, it may be in this manner removed. Nobody doubts but discreet fasting is very profitable in some cases; and, for the other, we find so many examples of them in the holy books, that we cannot think they are to be despised: nay, it is likely that good men found, by an outwardly humbled body, that the mind was more affected, and apt to be humbled therewith.

But then remember, that it is far better when the mind affects the body than when the body affects the mind; and we should strive rather after that, though we should not reject the help of this. I will give you an instance which shall at once prove this, and show withal the influence the body hath upon the mind. Let a man pray or preach in a melting tone, with much action of his hands, and with earnest looks and motions

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of his head, and the affections of the people shall be exceedingly stirred; whenas the very same matter and words, delivered after another manner, shall not half so much work upon them. Nay, if the voice be but sweet, and the carriage graceful, though there be little action of the body, and no arts of insinuation to conjure up the affections, yet the discourse which comes with these advantages shall find more favour and better entertainment with the hearers, than that which proceeds from an harsher mouth and a less plausible behaviour, though otherwise it be of far greater weight and moment. And so we see many people choose to sit in the minister's face rather than behind a pillar or the pulpit, because they say their minds are made more attentive, and their hearts more engaged thereby. From all which you are satisfied how much the soul many times is beholden to the eyes and ears, and those stirrings in the blood which outward objects create. But yet you know very well also, that one strong touch or stroke that the mind gives itself by a piercing consideration, is of far greater force to breed even a sensible delectation, if the body be disposed, than all the commotions and agitations in the body are to beget a rational satisfaction and contentment of mind, though it be never so desirous of it. And the affections, you know likewise, that are raised by those outward means, are not half so much worth as those which the mind itself excites, from the matter, and not the manner, of what is delivered.

These sensible consolations then are not to be slighted; but it is far better to look after the other: and if, when we desire them, it were as a step and help to the other, they were the more to be valued and endeavoured after. As the pleasant trembling and warbling[o] (I may call it) of the spirits doth much clarify them, (just as the air is purified by being shaken,) upon that account it is desirable, for the affording our mind a freer sight of its own objects. But if we love it only for the harmony and ravishing delight that is in itself, then it may prove dangerous, because it is apt to take the mind off from its own proper pleasures. It is to be acknowledged, that when

[o] [Misprinted 'warmbling' in the earlier editions. The author appears to have made use of the word in its primitive or radical meaning, as derived from the German *wirbeln*, 'to twirl,' 'turn round,' 'shake,' &c. old Teutonic *werben*, old French *werbler*. See Johnson, Richardson, &c.]

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the spirits are refined by gentle agitations, the soul sits in the body like to the eye in a clear sunshine day: but if at such a time it gaze merely on this light, and do not make use of it to look upon other objects, it loses by its advantages, and for an eye full of light lets go an heart full of joy and pure contentment. And besides this, it is to be considered, that we may be easily cheated by these sensible delectations; and therefore they are not to be desired so much as the other, wherein there is not so much danger of being cozened. Many warm souls think themselves very religious, because they are moved at a sermon, or can weep in their prayers; whereas they remain as cold as a stone and as dry as a rotten stick to all good works. They are covetous, peevish, proud, and censorious; and yet these ill qualities do not trouble them as long as they feel those pleasing motions, which tickle them into a belief that they are beloved of God, though they be no better. And, on the other side, many good souls imagine that they have more of God in them at such times, when they find such melting affections in their hearts, than they have at others, when they are without them; whereby they set a lighter esteem upon far greater testimonies of God's love (which then they need not want), such as humility, patience, denial of our own wills, and resignation to his good will and pleasure.

Upon this account many papists that have left our communion are wont wretchedly to deceive and abuse themselves; who profess that they find their hearts more stirred before a crucifix and the image of the blessed Virgin, and with prayers which they hear in an unknown language, than they were while they attended on the divine service of our church, where they knew, or might have known, as much of God and our Lord Jesus Christ, and all spiritual things, as they can do now. Alas! they consider not how much the fancy is taken with pictures and bodily gestures, and all things of novelty, without any preceding consideration of the mind, or any consent of the will before demanded. These may be but natural motions (such as are common to us with brute creatures), which are raised by outward objects, and not by ourselves: and as a drop of sweet phlegm, that trickles down upon a man's palate in a slumber, makes him think he swallows honey, or is glutted with sweet-

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meats; so, many times, do drowsy and inconsiderate souls dream that they are full of the joys of God, and satiated with divine pleasures, when they are but mocked with those natural delights which agreeable objects stroke them withal, while their fancies are awake and their minds are asleep.

Let us attend therefore, my friend, to the giving all satisfaction to our inward man, and seriously comply with our noblest desires of pleasing God, by doing his will in every thing. And if we can likewise give contentment thereby to all about us, well and good; but if that be not possible, let us not think we are the worse because we cannot, since we are not the better if we can. And seeing variety is so grateful to our weakness, you may try what passions you can excite in your heart by this short address to God, which I shall add, at the end of this particular, to many others which you are acquainted withal; advising you still to be satisfied and well pleased in the doing of what you ought, though it prove not so delightful to you as you desire.

A PRAYER.

O great God, what an happiness is this, that I should be beloved of thee, who art the Lord of all things! What contentment, what joy, what gladness of heart, ought I to conceive in the thoughts of thy surpassing love to me! and how willingly, how cheerfully, ought I to do thy will, that I may be more beloved of thee! Thy love is wonderful and unsearchable: we have nothing in us whereby to take a measure of it: it is beyond our understanding, and hath exceeded all our desires; and what have we larger than these? I must turn my thoughts therefore into admiration, and stand amazed at thy marvellous love, who hast done such things for such poor and inconsiderable creatures as we are. Thou hast sent thy Son to be our servant; and he hath laid down his life for our redemption; and he is alive again and exalted in heaven, to give us hope of thy endless love, in life immortal and glorious.

O how short is my understanding of all this! O how weak are my thoughts now that I reflect upon it! And my affections, alas! how short do they fall of my thoughts, and how soon do they vanish and expire! I can only cry out, *What is man that thou art so mindful of him? Lord, what are all the sons of men, that thou makest such account of them?* And when I have said this, I have said no-

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thing, but that I know not what to say or what to think of thy love. But it is part of the love which I admire, that thou wilt accept of such as we have; of our little thoughts, and feeble desires, and weak endeavours, when they proceed from true love and sincere affection to thy service. That, O Lord, I most heartily profess. Truly, I am thy servant: I am thy servant; and resolve for ever to continue in faithful and absolute obedience to all thy holy and good commandments. I am willing to be and to do what thou pleasest: and I refuse nothing (O that I knew how to attain to that happiness!) which may make thy service always pleasing to me. Support me howsoever, I most earnestly beseech thee, with thy almighty grace, that I may not be disheartened in my duty by any dulness or indisposition that seizes on me; but persevere in well-doing, with an humble trust and confidence that I shall never forsake thee, nor be forsaken of thee. Preserve me from vain elation of mind and false opinion of thy favour, when I feel myself transported with extraordinary delight in thy service; and from all dejection of spirit, and unjust suspicions of thy anger and displeasure, when I find less delight and complacence in the sincere and careful performance of all the duty which I owe thee. Fix me in such a steadfast and immovable love to justice, mercy, soberness, and godliness; that, serving thee constantly in these with an equal and quiet mind, I may have an unshaken belief of thy immutable love to me in all the alterations and changes which I feel in myself in this life, and an undoubted hope of a better condition in the life to come, through thy inconceivable mercies in Christ Jesus the righteous.

Amen, Amen.

SECT. VI.

But that your mind may not grow quite dull when your bodily spirits begin to sink, and to be flat and listless, observe, my friend, what it was that first begat devotion and lively affections in you towards God and goodness: for that will be most effectual to continue them. It is an ordinary maxim in physic, that we are nourished out of the same things of which we consist. Liquid things agree best with a child, while its flesh is soft, and but newly come from swimming in its mother's womb. Every lamb runs to the ewe that yeaned it, and lays hold of her teats, which are near the place where it lately lay. And so may we hope to suck both most sweetness and most proper sustenance from those truths which first affected our

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hearts, and wherein we have been wont to find the greatest relish. It is observable that iron, which naturally moves towards the loadstone when it hath once saluted it, and hath been received into its embraces, is more possessed with a magnetic love, and grows more sensible of its attractions, and more desirous of an union with it than it was before that touch, which made it feel how it could awaken and enliven it. Even just so it is with our hearts; which, when they feel the kind influence and invigorating power of any thing upon them, are the more disposed to receive the touches and impressions of it again, and naturally open themselves, and wish for it with greater passion than they did before they had that acquaintance with it.

If it was the loveliness and beauty then of the Divine nature and perfections which first awakened your heart, think of that, and turn your eyes towards it, for it is not all withered or decayed. How doth a fair image sometimes slip through a man's eyes into his heart, and engrave itself so deeply there that it is past his power to raze it out? And will not a sense of God and the light of his countenance, if it shine upon us, leave such a lasting remembrance of it in our souls, that we shall like him, and love him longer than a day? And if the first glance of him be so surprising, and make us that we cannot easily forget how amiable he is, O how infinitely more affecting will a serious and constant contemplation of him prove! If a little ray from his face, that glided into our hearts, we know not how, was so striking and glorious, how shall we be enamoured when we steadfastly, and on purpose, fix our minds and affection on him, desiring to be better acquainted with his excellencies! It is impossible but you should find your heart more powerfully stirred toward him, when you consider likewise that you can never discover all of him, but new beauties will every day present themselves, and shine upon you while you feelingly converse with him. You will not endure yourself, if you should love him the less, because he admits of your love, and every day appears more lovely and desirable.

But it was a sense of his love to you perhaps (which is far

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more common) that begat in you the affection of love to him. Then there cannot be a more delightful subject to your thoughts: nor can religion commend itself by any thing more than this, that it is love begot by love. And there is nothing surer than that you shall be constant and unwearied in your duty, if God's mercies and kindnesses can affect your heart, for they are constantly and unweariedly poured forth upon you. The new ones you enjoy daily are so many, that you may know by them the old ones are innumerable. You can turn your eyes no way, but you see yourself encircled with them, and hear something calling for your love. All his works declare, not only the excellence of his nature, but his goodness likewise and bounty towards you. For every one of them doth you some office of love. They all wait upon you at the command of your heavenly Father; and they would instantly deny their service, did not he continue it by the word of his power. He must be blind and never saw the sun who sees not God and his goodness every where. What beauties doth not that great luminary create! What fruits and flowers doth it not produce! What liquids doth it not generate! How doth it cherish all creatures! How doth it fill your eyes, and ears, and all your senses with its heavenly influences! And how many of those good things, which you behold by its light, hath God bestowed on you for your portion! Rather than not love some higher Being, one would be tempted to fall down and worship this. The poor Persians of old, knowing nothing more glorious, had their hearts wounded with the rays of the sun, and the light and warmth of its beams seemed so admirable, that they adored and loved it as their God. Shall not we then love him most heartily who made that and all things else? who hath opened to us also another world (as I have told you) by our Lord Jesus, far more beautiful and glorious than this, to make us love him? You can never want matter to feed your thoughts, and to recreate your mind with delightful meditations, and your heart with heavenly affections, when his goodness is so largely diffused beyond the bounds of all things visible. Or if, when you would meditate on his innumerable favours, you find that your thoughts stand still, and will not stir, or that they go backward and start aside to something else; your heart will even then burst forth into admiration

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and great expressions of love, to think that his goodness should be so great to us, who can scarce thank him for it or consider it.

But suppose it was a sense of sin, and the evil of it, which most startled your mind when you began to be religious; then every thing you see, every thing you can think of, will help to aggravate it. And the more you heighten its malignity, and represent to yourself its formidable nature, or reflect only on its baseness and disingenuity, together with its pride and arrogance, the more you will unavoidably be roused out of the sin of slumber and stupidity.

Or, if it was the promise of Heaven and the belief of immortal life (that I may name no more inducements) which first invited you to God, that is a thing so vast, that your desires and hopes of enjoying it will not let you be weary of thinking of it. Immortal life! What a good is that! will you say to yourself. On what should I fix my eyes so much, and with so much pleasure, as on that blessedness? Who would lose his portion in immortal life for all the dying pleasures and possessions of this world, though he could be sure to enjoy them to the end of his days? Immortal life! I am not yet awake, sure, or else the very name of it would make my heart leap, and quicken this dull and sluggish spirit to the most earnest and cheerful pursuit of it in all the exercises of Christian godliness. What should make me move so heavily in the ways of God, unless it be that I forget to look continually towards this immortal life? And what is that should make me forget it? How come I to lose that sense, and let go my hopes of immortal life? O wonderful love! O patient goodness! which still waits and attends upon me, to remind my soul of its everlasting bliss. May I, after so long a time of sleep, and such forgetfulness, be favoured with a sight of it! Will my love and free obedience be yet accepted? Awake, awake then, all the hidden powers of my soul; rise up and call him blessed. Who can withhold his heart from devoting itself affectionately to him? With what pleasures can I entertain myself comparable to those which grow out of the hope of immortal life? or what service can be unpleasant which is undertaken for so

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great a happiness? The thoughts of it make my soul light and aërial, even under the burden of this body. I feel it drawing me up above: from whence when I look down upon all the men of this lower world, how do they appear but as so many little ants, busily creeping on a molehill, while I sit upon the holy hill of God! O that my mind could dwell there! or, since I cannot reach so high a felicity, it may never descend from thence but with a lively remembrance of the joys of that celestial hope, which may bear me up above all the petty temptations of this world! For what is it that I labour and toil with such restless thoughts and desires? For what am I troubled and discontented? Can any thing make him absolutely unhappy who hopes to live for ever with God? No; I will rejoice in my Lord always: again, I say, I will rejoice. I will bear at least even all my dulness and listlessness to my duty with a quiet and composed mind, in hope one day to be more full of life.

Here my pen is very forward, and would be running on further than my design will allow. And therefore I must restrain it, and abbreviate also the remaining counsels, having been so long in some of the foregoing: lest, instead of a little book to carry about with you and refresh you, I should send you a tedious volume that will quite tire you. Let me only annex, before I leave this, a prayer to God, which relates to what hath been now said, and with which you are not unacquainted.

A PRAYER.

O most holy and blessed for evermore, who art the most excellent nature, the perfection of beauty, happy in thyself alone, and needest not the company of any of thy creatures to make thee happier than thou art. It is we poor beggarly things that stand in need of thy continued grace and love; who art the Father of our spirits, the only hope and stay of our hearts, the joy and comfort of our life, that filling and satisfying good, in whom alone our desires can meet with perfect rest and repose. The most glorious of all the heavenly host can find no higher pleasures than those of loving and praising and obeying thee; whose ministers they are and delight to be, in executing the commands of thy holy will in everything. For thy will is guided by the best and most excellent reason, and is so pro-

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pense, we see, to goodness, benignity, and charity, that all its commands must needs be reasonable and good too, and intend the greatest kindness to those that are obedient to them. Every creature in heaven and earth, and under the earth, and in the sea, obeys thy almighty word; declaring thee to be as good as thou art great, and giving not only *glory and power*, but *blessing and honour*[a], unto thy Divine Majesty, and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Yea, that blessed Son of thy love, when he came into the world, freely chose to do thy will and not his own, saying, *I delight to do thy will, O my God, yea, thy law is within my heart*[b].

What is there then in heaven or earth that I can wish, but to be united in hearty, devout and cheerful affection, together with my dearest Saviour, and all the saints and heavenly host, to that most holy will of thine, by a free and constant obedience to it? It is infinitely fit and desirable, I am sure, that we, above all the rest of thy creatures, should take a perfect contentment and pleasure in serving thee, who hast not only gratified all our senses with great and delightful variety of good things in this world, but also sent thy Son from heaven to entertain our spirits with joyful hopes of having our weak and short obedience here rewarded with great and endless pleasures at thy right hand in the world to come.

Lord, what is man, that thou shouldst have such a regard unto him! And what hearts have we, if after all thy grace we should delight in any thing more than thee; or be weary and faint in our minds, while we are doing thy blessed will? O how deeply should we have been indebted to thee, if thou hadst only admitted us to the happiness of knowing and loving thee, and complying with thy good will, while we dwell in this body! But that thou shouldst design, when we expire, to recompense the mere discharge of our duty here with the continued happiness of being with thee, and enjoying thee for ever, is an expression of thy bounty that exceeds all our wonder and admiration. If a full sense of this thy stupendous goodness should now possess our spirits, they would grow, I believe, too big and large for our bodies; and bursting forth in passionate love, would make their way into eternity, which only is wide and long enough to admire and love and praise thee in.

But be pleased, O Lord of love, in thy infinite goodness, to give me at present such a true and lively feeling of it as may make me

[a] Rev. v. 13. [b] Psalm xl. 8.

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think of nothing so much, or with so much delight and satisfaction of heart: and as may inflame me with such a fervent love unto thee, that it may melt and dissolve my will into thine, and consume all my corrupt desires, and abate, at least, the chilness and indifference of my spirit, and offer me up a whole burnt sacrifice to thee my God. And then stay, I most humbly beseech thee, for the fulness of my love, and praises, and joyful acknowledgments, till I come to that happy liberty of having nothing else to do but to love and thank and magnify thy name for ever and ever.

It is my daily and repeated desire, according as our Lord hath taught us, *that thy will may be done in earth, as it is in heaven;* to which, both now and ever, I say most heartily, Amen. O purge and refine my nature to such a degree of virtue and goodness, that I may at least delight to do thy will, as those heavenly creatures do. O that those little, little acts of piety and charity, which I am able to exercise in this world, may never want this complacence in the performance of them; which is the only thing that can give any value to them. It is a shame that I should groan, or go heavily under the sweet, the easy and gentle yoke of my most loving Saviour; none of whose commandments are grievous, but all his ways pleasantness, and his paths peace. But there is nothing more frightful than to think that I have at any time opposed his will, and thrown off the light burden of obedience which he layeth on me. I adore thy pardoning mercy; and wait on thee likewise for power from above, to save me from reproaching his religion by so much as any unwillingness to obey him. I implore thy divine inspirations, to preserve in my heart that delightful sense of thee, which may render it no less my contentment than my duty to follow Jesus in his humility and condescension of spirit; in his meekness and patience; in his kindness and tenderness; in his holiness and purity; in his love to thee, and to all mankind; in doing good, and suffering evil; in resolved denial of my own will, when contrary to thine; and in every thing giving thanks to thee, O Father of mercies, which is thy will concerning us in Christ Jesus. To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

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SECT. VII.

And having thus poured forth your soul to God, you may feel yourself sometimes so mightily moved, that your heart runs out, with much pleasure, in abundance of pious thoughts and holy affections, which you are not wont to find at other times. And then, my friend, let me tell you, it would be of singular use if you would set down those extraordinary thoughts, and passionate effusions of your soul, which you feel in your greater enlargements. These are so many records, which you have to show of the Spirit's prevalency and triumph over the dull flesh. They are the flights of your soul, whereby you see to what it aspires, and how great and happy it may be when God pleases. They are the tokens of God's love, whereby he would endear himself to your heart. And you may look upon them as if they were golden chains let down from heaven to draw and attract you thither; and bind you fast, but willingly, to your duty. It is great pity to throw away such sweet flowers after once smelling of them; to lay by such good thoughts, as we do a common book after the first reading. I would wish you to find some safe repository for them, and to lay up carefully such expressions of your mind in meditation or prayer as are most lively and affecting; and to fetch them out for your use when any dulness or straitness shall oppress you.

As a good student when he reads a book, though he may let pass the most of it which he knew before, yet remarks and preserves in his notes the choicest parts, in which he finds great strength of reason, or sharpness of wit, or may be any ways useful to him in his design; so would I have you mark those passages in your converse with God and divine things, which have in them some fulness of sense, some liveliness of conceit, some elevation of mind, and are so much beyond the ordinary strain of thinking, as if they were some beam of light darted from an higher hand, or the utmost endeavour of the soul to be with God. When you find, I say, your conceptions so fit and proper, that you seem to behold the bare face of truth, when something smites your heart with such a force of reason that you are constrained to yield, or when such an holy breath

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comes into you, that your soul swells and grows too big for your body; let them be noted as carefully as the month and the day was by your parents, which brought you into the world; or as you remember the happy time, when God bestowed some singular blessing on you, which made this world a more comfortable place than otherwise you should have found it.

Examples, you know, are wont to move us much; and therefore of what power may we suppose it to be, when we can propound ourselves for an example to us? This copy, as I may call it, of ourselves, besides that it will make us blush at another time to see how unlike we are to ourselves, will also excite us to recover the same countenance and aspect that once we had; and make some colour come into our faces, and warmth into our spirits, when we are pale and cold in the service of God. It will remember us likewise of the pleasurable motions, that were then in our hearts; and remembrance is the way to call them back again. It will furnish us also with some matter for our thoughts, when they are barren, and can bring forth nothing. For, though reading of some good book, in this case, may be very advantageous to us, yet nothing can more assist us than a book of our own making; the births, as I may term them, of our own mind: both because they best suit with our notions, and can soon find the place where they lay before, and because they will remember us also of God's grace and goodness to us; so that either shame, or love, or hope will make us strain to do the same again, or to excel ourselves. When no thoughts will stir within, we must call for some helps without to move us; and what is there that will so easily enter, as that which was once within us before? Nothing sure can better fit us than that which our own souls have cut out and shaped for themselves.

As a chymist therefore that is drawing out the more retired spirits of things, if he grows faint in his work, takes a drop or two of his own extracts to bring his soul back again; so should we do, when our liveliness begins to forsake us, and our soul complains of its weak and fainting fits. We must pour in some of those thoughts which we have formerly drawn out of our hearts; which are, as it were, the quintessence of our souls,

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and the very spirits of our devotion, that they may recall the life that is flying away. And tell me, I beseech you, what a reviving it is, but to think that we once had such thoughts in our mind. What a cordial is it to the languishing soul, to feed, as I may say, upon its own honey, and taste of its own sweetness! How greedily will it embrace, and how gladly will it smile upon the children of its own womb! How pleasant will it be but to hope that it may become fruitful again, as well as it was before! to behold the picture of what it may be, as well as of what it hath been in former times!

Save therefore some of these; and let them not all be spilt, as they distil from your soul. Lay them up in store; considering the time may come when your soul will be glad to have them restored to it, and will receive them as so many drops of balm. Keep them by you, as you do some precious liquor; which, by long labour and many operations, you have fetched out of a number of excellent herbs or spices, or other rare ingredients. For, though you must not have recourse to them every day, yet there may be a season, you see, when they will do you so high a pleasure, that you may owe your life or your cheerfulness to them. They may stand you, at least, in so much stead, as to preserve you from utter distaste of yourself, and despair of God's favour; when you are apt to droop, nay sink under the weight of your body, or any other load that lies very heavy upon you.

Cheer up your soul then with some of its own sublimer thoughts; and turning yourself to the Father of mercies, say:

A PRAYER.

O MY God; what pledges of thy love are these which I have received already from thee! How precious are thy thoughts towards me! and how dear and precious have they been in mine eyes! O how great is the sum of them! I see, I see, how gracious thou art. I am not without many tokens of thy readiness to help me, and of thy kind intentions to promote me, by patient continuance in my duty, to everlasting happiness. O how sweet is the remembrance of that time when thou wast pleased to visit me, and inspire my heart with devout affections to thee! How joyful hast thou made me with the light of thy countenance, which is better than life itself!

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Accept of such thanks as I am now able to offer thee for thy abundant goodness to me. Blessed be thy goodness, that I have not lived all my days as a stranger to thee; that my soul hath not always grovelled on the earth, but been lifted up sometime unto heaven. Blessed be thy goodness, that it hath not lain continually as a barren wilderness, but been fruitful in some good thoughts, and pious affections, and zealous resolutions, and worthy designs to do thee honour and service in the world. O that this remembrance of thy past loving-kindness, and of the powerful operations of thy holy Spirit in my heart, may at this time mightily move and excite me to the like devout expressions of my love to thee. O that I may feel it renewing my strength; or reviving my spirit, at least, to a comfortable hope in thee, that thou wilt never utterly forsake me. There is all reason, I confess most thankfully, that I should confide in thee, and wait upon thee still, with a steadfast faith, for fresh influences from heaven, to make me howsoever persevere with a constant mind, notwithstanding all the discouragements I conflict withal, in a careful and exact observance of all thy commands.

This I know is the best proof of my love to thee. And therefore help me, as to pray always, so to exercise myself in works of mercy, to do justly, to be clothed with humility, to preserve my body and soul in purity, and to discharge all the duties of my place and relations with an upright heart and willing mind. And when thou graciously vouchsafest to enlarge my spirit, in abundance of delightful thoughts of thee, and to raise me to the highest pitch of love to thee, O that it may not only please me, but make me better. Lift me up thereby above all the temptations of this world; and quicken me to be the more fruitful in all good works, and to excel in virtue: to *increase* especially *and abound* so much *in love towards my brethren, and towards all men, that my heart may be established unblamable in holiness before thee, my God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints*[d]. *Amen.*

SECT. VIII.

And here I cannot but commend to you frequent meditation and serious consideration (which you might expect to have heard of before), as of singular use, for the continuance either of your diligence, or of those delectable affections in it. For

[d] 1 Thess. iii. 12, 13

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the soul is a thing so entire in itself, that if one part be strongly moved, the other will be so too: just as when the nave of a wheel turns round, it makes the outermost circumference to circle about with it. Much is said by many on this subject; and therefore I shall only direct you how to meditate when you are dull, and unfit, as you imagine, for any thoughts.

When we discourse (you know) with a servant, and desire to affect him with what we say; if he be stupid and heavy, and seems not at all to be concerned in our words, then we are wont to make use of interrogations, beseechings, objurgations, exclamations, corrections of ourselves, admirations, and such like ways, to rouse his apprehension. For we find that if an object touches any of our senses gently and softly, we mind it not while we are intent upon other matters; but if it strikes us with some smartness, and comes with a vehemency and importunity, it alarms the whole soul, and makes it not only hear but demand what is the matter. And thus it is in our discourses, if they barely present themselves before men's souls that are otherwise engaged, they regard them not; unless, by some such form of speech as I have mentioned, they put on some sharpness, and be armed with some authority. If we speak, for example, to one that hath committed a fault, in such terms as these: Indeed you are very much to blame; you ought not to have done thus; it is contrary both to God and to yourself; the world will cry shame of you; nobody will endure you, &c.—he stands perhaps as if he were marble, and had been composed of insensible materials. But if we say, What did you mean, when you did such or such an action? Whither were your wits and your conscience gone? Could you do thus, and not tremble at God's displeasure? Nay, answer me, do you think that God is an idol, who regards you not, and cannot strike? Oh that any man should be so sottish! that he should be such an ill friend to himself! Ill friend, did I say? such a desperate enemy, I meant, such a fury, such a devil to his own soul, &c.—this kind of language, it is likely, may make him seem a man; one that is made of flesh, and not of stone.

In such like manner, then, may you learn to meditate alone, by discoursing with your own soul after the way of expostula-

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tion, chiding, reprehension, and such like; wherein there is great variety, and therefore great easiness, and no less pleasure. It was a more awakening expression for David to say, *Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me*[a]*?* than if he had only said, I do not do well to be dejected on this fashion; it is to no purpose to afflict and trouble myself; far better and more seemly were it for me to rest contented. And the repetition of this again[b] gives it a greater force, and adds a sharper edge to it, than if it had been but a single question. And so likewise doth it more pierce a sinner's heart to hear God say, as you read in the Prophets, *Why will you die? Wilt thou not be made clean? When shall it once be? Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this*[c]*?* than barely to tell him that there is no reason a man should destroy himself, and that he is very desirous of his good, and that it is high time also a sinner should amend; and if he will not, that he cannot suffer it, but will certainly punish such continued contempt of his forbearance. And therefore you need not doubt but your soul will sooner open to you at such knocks as these, and more speedily bring forth its conceptions and passions by the midwifery (as I may call it) of such like questions and arguings with yourself, than by any other way whereby you endeavour to help its delivery.

Let me present you with an example of such a discourse suitable to the drift and design of this treatise. O my soul, (may you or I say,) are we now to learn that there is a God? Dost thou know nothing but what thine eyes see, and thy hands feel, and thy palate tasteth? Strange that thou shouldst so forget to look into thyself! And must I be ever demonstrating to thee that thou art not of this earth, but a parcel of another world? What! dost thou not call God thy Father? is it not him thou seekest? with him wouldst thou not live for ever? Say, wouldst thou not? is not this thy earnest desire? Speak, and tell me if thou art not of this mind. Need I use so many words to extort from thee this confession? O how dull art thou, if thou dost not yet understand the difference be-

[a] Psalm xlii. 5. [b] Ver. 11, and Psalm xliii. 5.
[c] [Jer. xxvii. 13; Ezek. xviii. 31; xxxiii. 11; Jer. xiii. 27; v. 9, 29; ix. 9.]

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tween his favour and all the kingdoms of this earth! And is it possible thy memory should be so perfidious as to have no remaining sense of the incomparable happiness thou hast sometime seen he is preparing for thee? Where hast thou been? what hast thou been doing? what is become of all those holy thoughts, and of that blessed hope of immortal life, which was so lately the joy of thy heart? Is that happiness grown less? or is it less certain than it was that thou art grown so cold, so listless and indifferent? Let me hear thee speak what thou thinkest of it. Is it true, or is it not? do we dream, or is it a certain report which comes to our ears, when Jesus tells us he will give eternal life to them that obey him? what answer dost thou return? would a man take all the world in exchange for his portion in such a bliss? shall our present satisfaction here be dearer to us than our future repose and fulness of joy in the presence of the Lord? What did I say? satisfaction? alas! how far are we all from that! *The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing*[d]. Who hath bewitched thee, then, to think of seeking thy happiness here? Is there so much as room for thy choice whom thou wilt love, and to whom thou wilt cleave, as thy chiefest good? Doth not necessity carry thee to God, and to the eternal world, if thou meanest to have satisfaction? O how glad am I to find that there is thy heart! What a pleasure is it to love thy God, and to hope thou art beloved of him! Dost thou not hold every thing for thy enemy which would rob thee of such a pleasure?——

But, alas! how long shall I find thee full of these apprehensions? Canst thou assure me how many days this sense will abide with thee? O how suddenly may I feel thee altered, and become a senseless thing! How treacherous wast thou lately! how false to thy own resolutions! Would one think thee a rational being when thou so forgattest thy greatest interest? Was it thou who then didst govern me, or some brutish soul that came for a time and officiated in thy stead? How often hast thou told me of a world of enemies that watch for our ruin! and yet how negligent and supine art thou, as if we had none! Need I remember thee how long ago it is since thou didst yield, and submit thyself to the weakest of them?

[d] [Eccles. i. 8.]

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Thou knowest very well that on such a day thou wert very angry, but canst thou tell me for what? On another day (would I could say but one day) thou wast lazy; were thine enemies then all asleep? At another time a slight occasion made thee omit a good duty; O at what a small rate art thou willing to part with thy peace! Can one trust any more such a silly and fickle thing as thou art? Can one rely on any of thy promises? How wilt thou be able to hold out in such a long contest as we are engaged to maintain? How wilt thou be patient to the end? Such a dull and lazy soul as thou art, so timorous, so inconstant, so easily abused, so soon pushed down with every occurrence; what hopes can one have of it?——

By this vehement inveighing against yourself, it is possible your heart may be much awakened, even in its most listless moods, to some generous resolution: and it may answer itself after this sort.

Sad things are here objected against me, or if that be too mild a word, why did not I say insufferable things? Much sloth, idleness, impatience, (I wish thou couldst tell me all,) I am accused of; and, alas! my present dulness assures me it is too true. O that I could deny it without any fear of a terrible rebuke! But must I therefore be so cast down as to be discouraged? Can he that hath done ill, never be so happy as to be able to do well again? May I not hope so much as that I may be chidden into better behaviour? Where is the doom passed that I shall never amend? Show me that it is impossible, or else I will not despair of it. True it is, I need a great deal of patience; but where should I begin to practise it, but upon myself? Is it not fit to attend and wait till I can grow better? Many enemies, indeed, I have; but shall I become an enemy to myself also? and shall I imagine that I have no friend? I have been inconstant, and peevish, and discontented, and a lover of the world, &c. But must I therefore be always so? No; therefore I will not be so always. It is confessed, my endeavours have been careless and lazy: what should I do, therefore, but be more vigilant and industrious? I have fallen sometimes; but is it wisdom, therefore, to lie still? Do you call this good reasoning? Is there any sense in such a conclusion?

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Rather I will take more heed to myself, and walk with greater care. What though I have given back in some assaults? May not a man recover his courage, and behave himself more valiantly? O the folly of human nature! that we should undo ourselves at every turn; first by doing amiss, and then by despairing to do otherwise! Bless the Lord, O my soul, that we are aware of this dangerous mistake. And let us not despond, though we have no reason to boast and glory in our resolution.

Was not this the condition of other of the saints long before I was born? Am I the only example of an heavy and sluggish soul? Must I be recorded the first in the catalogue for inconstancy? What helps and assistances then had they to restore themselves, and to preserve them to the end, which are strangers to our ears? Must I despatch a message to some foreign country for their recipes, as we send for drugs and spices? Cannot we tell without the charge of going to Hippo what holy Austin strengthened himself withal? Must we take a pilgrimage to Rome to learn St. Hierome's medicines? Sure, my soul, thou hast the same gracious Saviour, the same compassionate High Priest, the same cordial promises, the very same hope of the gospel, which revived and supported their hearts; or if thou hast not, speak, that I may go and seek them. Look, then, on thy blessed Saviour; look on his holy apostles; nay, look upon all those excellent persons in the church that have succeeded them. Shall we not follow such glorious leaders? Are their examples impossible to be imitated? If they be, they are not examples. How can we be cold when we think of the flames of their love? How can we be lazy and unwilling to do, when we see how forward, how vehemently desirous they were to suffer? What should hinder us from going on, when we have such a multitude of triumphant souls before our eyes, whom nothing could drive back? Shall pleasures, shall the incumbrance of business, shall relations and friends, yea, shall dangers, shall death? No; I am not enchanted, I am not affrighted with these words. Begone, you false and deceitful pleasures. How dare you perplex me, you impertinent employments? No more of your importunity, I charge you, if you will be my friends. Welcome contempt,

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welcome reproach, welcome poverty, or any other thing, which will certainly bring me nearer to my God.

But what is it that gives you this sudden confidence? How come you of a coward to grow thus courageous? of a snail, who made you thus to mount up in your thoughts like an eagle? Who will believe that thou wilt do such things? I will believe it (may you answer again to yourself), whatsoever can be objected against it. Why are these called sudden thoughts, which are my most deliberate resolutions? *Through the Lord I shall do valiantly: he it is that shall tread down mine enemies under me*[c].

The like discourse you may have with yourself about God, or any other subject. You may consider not only that he is gracious and merciful, but cry out, O how great, how great is his goodness! Is there any thing thou canst name comparable to his loving-kindness? What makes thee then so unwilling to go to him? What is the cause of such a diffidence and unbelief as hath deadened and dispirited thine heart? Could I think that any thing would make thee fall into this stupidity? Didst thou not once look upon him as the first beauty, as the joy, the health, and the life of our souls? Who is it that is altered, and hath suffered a change, he or thou? Is he not *the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever*[d]? Why shouldst not thou be the same too? or why shouldst thou not think that he will make thee the same again? How many times is it repeated in the book of God that *his mercy endureth for ever?* For whom was it but such trembling souls as thou that he proclaims himself so often to be abundant in mercy, goodness, and truth? But must we not then believe it? Is this the way to obtain his mercy, by distrusting of him? What a preposterous course is this! how unseemly, nay, how unkind is it to question these gracious declarations of his love! Let us be confidently persuaded he hath a greater desire than we that we should be true and faithful to him. Let us rest our thoughts in this conclusion, that *neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor*

[c] [Ps. lx. 12.] [d] [Hebr. xiii. 8.]

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any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord[e].

Now when you find any benefit by such expostulations and reasonings with yourself, and hope it would do you some good, if you should use the like in an humble address to God, you may be furnished with several strains of devout admiration, and pathetical appeals to his all-seeing Majesty out of the holy Scriptures. There are examples also of the other; but expostulations with God are not to be imitated without much caution and holy fear, and ought not to be commonly used. It may be sufficient to conclude the foregoing meditations with some such form of words as this.

A PRAYER.

O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is miserable man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Lord, what honour is that which thou hast conferred on him, in setting him now, in the person of Jesus, above the angels themselves! *For to which of the angels didst thou say at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, Let all the angels of God worship him? Who in the heaven can be compared unto the Lord? who among the mighty can be likened unto the Lord?* And therefore, *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee. My soul thirsteth for thee, and longeth after thee. O when wilt thou come unto me? There be many that say, Who will show us any good? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me.* Show me thyself, and it sufficeth. *Lord, what wait I for? Truly my hope is in thee. My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him. By thee, O Lord, have I been holden up from the womb: thou art he that took me out of my mother's bowels. My praise shall be continually of thee.*

But who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? who can show forth all his praise? Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which

[e] Rom. viii. 38, 39.]

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thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward; they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered. O how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men! What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me? I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved. My hands also will I lift up to thy commandments, which I have loved: and I will meditate in thy statutes.

O how I love thy law! it shall be my meditation every day. How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth. Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way. Do I not hate them, O Lord, that thee? and am I not grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies. Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Teach me thy way, O Lord; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name. So will I praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart: and I will glorify thy name for evermore. Amen.

SECT. IX.

And that you may be the more humbly confident both of God's continued goodness and your own fidelity, and the more fit likewise for pious meditations, labour, I entreat you, as much as ever you can, to maintain a constant cheerfulness of spirit and lightsomeness of heart. Without this it will be always night with you, or but a cold winter's day; and as you will have no list either for meditation or any other employment, so you will be apt to live in perpetual suspicion of God, and of your friends, and of yourself.

Melancholy is a dull, lumpish humour, which makes us of a frozen disposition and a leaden temper. It inclines us not only to think worse of ourselves than we are, but to do worse than otherwise we should. It represents those things as exceeding difficult which may be done with ease, and those as impossible which have in them any considerable difficulty. It benumbs and stupifies our souls, and will let us feel nothing but itself.

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It quite dispirits us, and will not suffer us to do any thing, because it imagines we cannot stir. It shows us to ourselves in an ugly glass; and then no wonder we look amiss upon all things else. Some things it makes to appear bigger than they are, and then all the rest appear less; and having conceived them otherways than they are, it nourishes the conceit till we believe it real.

As under the weight of some sluggish matter in the blood a man sometimes fancies his arms are as big as posts, and then his hands seem as heavy as a pig of lead, and he thinks he is unable to lift them up to his head; so it is with our minds, when they are oppressed with the burden of a sad and melancholy humour. It makes all our duty seem very great, and our strength to be none at all. All impediments it renders as big as mountains; but ourselves not of force enough to remove a straw. It first binds up all the powers of the soul, and then will not let them be unloosed. It makes us very fearful of that which it persuades us we cannot avoid; and it afflicts us for that which yet it makes us fancy we cannot do. In an heat it pushes us forward; but suddenly it cools, and says we cannot go. If it catch fire, it makes us wild; and when it hath spent that flame, it leaves us sots and fools. It pricks us forward sometimes to an enterprise; but itself is the shackles and fetters that will not let us move.

This heaviness you must take heed of, and give no indulgence to it: for it is the worm of the mind, (as one of the ancients expresses it,) which eateth up its parent that brought it forth. Contrary to the nature of other births, it pleases us much, when we bring it forth, but proves a miserable torment to us as soon as it is born. Melancholy musings, I mean, are at first a very delightful entertainment to the mind; but they grow in a little time to be a very troublesome brood. They are a dangerous maze, in which a man may easily lose himself, and from whence he cannot, without much difficulty, get forth. Honey is not sweet to a feverish man; nor are the sweetest truths acceptable to the sad. Clogs are not a greater impediment to the feet than this humour to the motions of the soul. The eyes are not more darkened with some kind of fumes and

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vapours than the understanding is with its black imaginations. The air is not more poisoned when it is charged with a thick and stinking mist, than the mind is offensive to itself and others when it is buried in its clouds. And as the sun, when it looks through a fog, seems as if it were all bloody, so do the fairest objects, even God himself, appear in a dismal and horrid shape when these sullen exhalations gather about us.

Labour then continually to disperse them, and blow them away by such means as you find, by experience, to be most available to that purpose. For cheerfulness causes the soul to breathe in a pure air, and to dwell in a wholesome and sweet enclosure. It makes our work seem easy, and difficulties seem little, and God seem good, and so our strength seem great and irresistible. It enlightens the mind, it encourages the heart, it adds wings to the affections: and therefore he that forbids it to our souls keeps out the welcomest guest and the best friend that nature hath. It misbeseems none but the wicked, in whom it is commonly a light mirth and a foolish jollity. As you see fine ornaments and curious dresses set off an handsome face, though they render those who are ugly more ill-favoured, so doth cheerfulness exceedingly become good souls, though in bad men it be most ridiculous.

For which cause it is neither unmeet to use any helps that nature affords us to acquire it, nor to call in the assistance of innocent arts and pretty inventions to invite it to keep us company. Socrates blushed not to be found at boy's play with his children. The wise and solemn Cato sometimes stooped to be a little frolic. The great Scipio thought it not unbecoming his triumphal body (as Seneca[f] calls it) to use grave dances, and trip about a room in decent measures. Some devout men indeed have pronounced of such like pastimes, as physicians do of mushrooms, that the best ordered are worth nothing: but they did not mean sure to decry all those pleasures which of themselves are indifferent, and which the intention alone can render good as well as evil. You ought not to refuse any ingenious or harmless recreations which you find will cherish

[f] [De Tranq. An. cap. 15. §. 11. cf. Cic. de Orat. ii. 6, Horat. Sat. ii. 1. 71.]

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or refresh your spirit; though by souls of a dark complexion they be deemed fooleries. It is too great a burden to impose on yourself such restraints, as not to dare so much as laugh, for fear of giving occasion of suspicion to the weak, or of slander to the wicked. But since a spirit free and full of life is most useful, being endued with more strength and ability than any other, it ought to be preserved in its alacrity; and when it droops and languishes, be excited to recover its cheerfulness again.

I know you do not think it a crime to laugh, nor are you in love with a studied face. You are none of those who take innocence and severity to be such inseparable companions that they can never be found asunder; nor that judge a free carriage to be a certain sign of an ill mind, and a merry humour to be a constant token of levity of spirit or want of judgment. But I desire that you would not only think it lawful, but necessary to be pleasant; and that you would by no means suffer yourself to become sad, under the notion of being serious. The ancient Christians were so cautious in this point, that we read in Palladius of an old hermit, who, having five hundred scholars, would never dismiss them without this lesson, "My friends, be cheerful; do not forget, I beseech you, to be cheerful[e]." This was his constant lecture; which he repeated as often as St. John did those words, (which he is reported always to have had in his mouth,) "My little children, love one another[f]." He took it, I suppose, out of St. Paul, who gives this admonition thrice to the Philippians, *Rejoice in the Lord. Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice*[g]. It is an unseemly thing for you to be sad and heavy, who serve so good a Master. from whom you shall receive the reward of an eternal inheritance. If they that traffic in earthly goods rejoice in an advantageous bargain, why should not religious people, whose merchandise is wisdom, (a choicer thing than silver or gold,) who have many divine blessings already in possession, and are in certain hope of more and greater, cherish a perpetual joy, and ever be of good comfort?

[e] [The abbot Apollos is probably referred to. Pallad. Hist. Lausiac. cap. 52. tom. ii. p. 984. Biblioth. Patr. Græco-Lat. fol. Par. 1624.]

[f] [Hieron. in Galat. vi. 10. tom. vii. col. 529 A. Cave's Lives of the Apostles, p. 118.]

[g] Phil. iii. 1; iv. 4.

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By which you may see whence we are to derive our cheerfulness, and to what we must be principally beholden for it. It springs out of an hearty and solid belief of the blessed gospel, and out of a sincere obedience to it; and increases with our growth in spiritual knowledge and understanding, and in love to God, and all our brethren. All which, it would be easy to show you, is comprehended in those words of the apostle to the Colossians; where he expresses his earnest desire for them, and other Christian people, *that their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*[h].

But when our natural spirits fail and sink within us, we must use natural remedies to recruit them and raise them up again. None are to be rejected which are not sinful, or will endanger to make us so. But those especially are to be chosen, which will cheer the body, and yet do no injury, but rather prove beneficial to the mind. Of which sort I shall recommend one to you, when I have concluded this advice, as I have done the rest, with a short prayer to God.

A PRAYER.

O Father of mercies, and God of all comfort; who hast given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through thy grace in Christ Jesus. Blessed be thy abundant love, which hath exceeded towards us in him beyond all our desires. O how excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God, which hath so blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, that it is become our duty to rejoice in him alway, and to be exceeding glad, even in the midst of all the troubles of this life! O that I could keep such a perpetual and fresh remembrance of his benefits in my mind, as may make me rejoice evermore! That so I may recommend the religion of our Lord Jesus to all others, and testify to all the world, by my alacrity in doing and suffering his blessed will, that his yoke is easy and his burden is light.

Possess me with such right notions and apprehensions of thee, and bless me also with such integrity of heart, that I may both have

[h] Col. ii. 2, 3.

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the peace of a good conscience, which is a continual feast, and be filled likewise with joy in the Holy Ghost, out of a sense of thy divine favour to me, which is better than life itself. Deliver me both from unprofitable sadness, and from vain mirth. Preserve me constantly in an equal tranquillity of mind, and a becoming cheerfulness of spirit. Bear me up, I beseech thee, above all the afflictions which may befall me, by the joys of faith, and hope, and love. And when I shall need the relief of inferior pleasures, O that they may never make me lose the taste of heavenly delights, but rather dispose me, by the refreshments of my body, to a more lively discharge of all my duty, and to a quicker sense of all divine enjoyments. And teach me to be so wise in the choice of my pleasures, that they may not leave me sad afterward; but I may remain innocent and unblamable before thee, and be better pleased also in the humble expectation of the *times of refreshment which shall come from the presence of our Lord.* Amen.

SECT. X.

THIS puts me in mind to speak a little of good company, as a singular means not only to cheer and refresh your spirits, but to quicken and improve your mind also in wisdom or virtue. 'The joy of one soul is no joy,' say the Hebrews in their common proverb; which is muchwhat the same with that of the Greeks, 'One man is no man[z].' Good company will help to divert our thoughts, and yet not let us spend our time unprofitably. It will make us cheerful, and yet wise and serious: it will delight us, and do us no harm; but make us rather much better.

Some cheerfulness, I confess, is supposed in a man's spirit to make him good company for his neighbours; for it renders his conceits quick and pleasant, his words gracious and acceptable, and his very countenance smooth and obliging. But if some dulness at present make him not to be a good companion for them, yet they may be the better company for him; and their cheerfulness may serve to revive his spirits, and make him as brisk and well pleased as themselves. For it is not more natu-

[z] [Εἷς ἀνὴρ οὐδεὶς ἀνήρ,— Proverb. anon. 388, et Zenob. iii. 51, apud Gaisford. Parœm. Græc. pp. 44, 292.]

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ral to us to yawn when others do, than to be uncloudy in our countenances when the faces of others shine.

We can scarce refrain from sighing when we are entering upon a very long journey, through ways in which there are many dangers, and which we have never gone before. But to perform it all alone is so uncomfortable, that we are apt to grow weary as soon as we have begun it; and therefore are mightily inclined to seek for some fellow-travellers to make it seem less tedious. Our very horses will go the better when they travel together; and the beast (as some philosophers call our body) which we carry along with us will not be so soon tired, if we let it have some to follow and bear it company. Whether it be that the forwardness of others spurs us up to mend our pace, or whether it be that love to them makes us like them, I know not; but so it is, that they who have the goodness of others to help and encourage them, are wont to find themselves better disposed than otherwise they should have been if they had lived alone.

It is Solomon's observation[a], that *he who walketh with wise men shall be wise; but a company of fools shall be the worse for it.* We have an example of the former part of it (saith R. Elieser[b]) in Lot; who, by the pious example of Abraham, with whom he lived, became a good man, imitating his works and walking in his steps. For as Abraham, when he dwelt in Charran, was wont to exercise hospitality, and to receive strangers; so did Lot when he dwelt in Sodom; whereby he had the happiness to entertain angels. As a man (saith he) who goes into the shop of one that sells spices, though he cheapen and buy nothing, yet receives a grateful odour, and carries away a refreshment; so does he that converses with the just partake of their good manners, and carries away a sweet remembrance of their works. Therefore, 'Either society, or death,' is a common proverbial wish among the same Hebrews[c]. One cannot tell which is the greater desert, as Nausiclides was wont to speak, (as Athenæus tells us[d],) a

[a] Prov. xiii. 20.

[b] [Pirke R. Elieser, cap. 25. p. 58.]

[c] [אוֹ חַבְרוּתָא אוֹ מִיתוּתָא: 'Aut societas aut mors.'—Plantavit. Floril. Rabbin. § 27. p. 5.]

[d] [Ναυσικλείδους ἐρημίαν (al. Ναυσικλείδην εἰρηκέναι) .. μήτε ἔαρ, μήτε φίλους. — Athen. Deipnos. lib. ii. cap. 60. p. 62 d.]

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place where there is no spring, or where there are no good neighbours. He must be more than a man whose spirits do not fail him if he want this refreshment. He will soon be gone to another world if he have no society in this. It is a thing so necessary, that company not so good as we would wish proves now and then better than none at all, if it be but to make us more contented when we are alone, and the more to prize our solitary opportunities.

And if we cannot have the society of many, yet we may find great use of one special friend, if well chosen. Nay, it is the advice of the wise son of Sirach: *Be in peace with many: nevertheless have but one counsellor of a thousand*[e]. O how great a good is this for a man to meet with a well prepared heart, wherein to lay up his secrets, more safe than a jewel in his cabinet! whose conscience and fidelity he shall stand in less fear of than his own; whose discourse shall lenify his carefulness; whose opinion shall despatch his counsels; whose cheerfulness shall dissipate his sorrows; and whose very aspect is delightful! This is a jewel worth one's seeking; and he that hath him not is but half a man. "A man without a friend is like the left hand without the right," as one of the Jewish doctors speaks[f]. He is an imperfect creature; and, according to this man's opinion, wants the better part of himself. But, howsoever, we may take Solomon's word for it, that *two are better than one.* If we have the use of another man's parts, time, and labours, it is as if we had two souls, and as many bodies, and did see with four eyes, and think with two understandings. He illustrates this in that place[g], by putting three cases, (which may be easily applied to our spiritual concernments,) wherein the benefit of a virtuous friendship plainly appears. First, in the case of inward weakness, he saith, *if the one fall, the other will lift up his fellow.* When we slip, a good friend will support us; or, if we be down, he will presently restore us to ourselves again. Secondly, in case of dulness, if the one be cold, the other may communicate some heat

[e] Ecclus. vi. 6.

[f] [אָדָם בְּלֹא חָבֵר כְּשְׂמֹאל בְּלֹא יָמִין; 'Homo sine sodali sicut sinistra sine dextera manu.'—Plantavit. Floril. Rabbin. § 18. p. 4. Cf. Proverb. Arab. 108. apud Orell. Opusc. Gr. Vet. Sent. et Moral. tom. ii. p. 489.]

[g] [Eccles. iv. 9, 10, &c.]

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to him. If any person think himself so strong that he is not in danger to fall, yet the best grown man may feel some chilness and spiritual numbness creep upon his soul: for, alas! we are at a great distance from the sun in compare with those who are above, and it is, as it were, a winter with us while we are here in this lower world. Now, *how can one*, saith he, *be warm alone?* But *if two lie together, then they have heat.* As two firesticks will singly cast no warmth, but let their flame die; whereas both together will make a good fire in the chimney; so will two friends, that lie close to each other's hearts, keep themselves from that coldness which, separated, would seize upon them both. And, thirdly, in the case of worldly troubles and violent enemies that outwardly assault them, though they may *prevail against one*, yet *two*, he saith, *shall withstand them.* When we have a second, we may venture to go into the field; and, by a double strength, we may take up the bucklers, and hope to overcome, when we might justly doubt of our own single valour.

But I cannot better represent the truth of all this than in the words of Simplicius[h], an excellent philosopher, who hath briefly, but fully, demonstrated the many happy advantages of pure and hearty friendship, in a discourse to this effect.

"There is a truth in what is commonly said, that when a man hath got a friend, he hath no longer one, but two souls and bodies. And then who can doubt but that they who are possessed of each other's persons will have a communion in their external goods? But what is this in compare with that great light of truth which shines in united souls? and with that complete virtue which, arising out of what excels in each, and being brought, as it were, into one common stock, is countenanced by the heavenly powers, who shine upon it because of its perfection? They are safer than other men in their counsels; they are less apt to trip in their actions; which are corroborated both by prudence and by power. Nay, suppose a man's occasions call him into a far country, he is present by his faithful friend to all the relations he leaves behind him at

[h] In Epict. cap. 37. [pp. 184–7.]

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home. Nay, not only while he lives, but when he is dead and departed to another world, he is as secure of their happiness, during the life of his friend, as if he still remained himself and conversed among them. And what is there more pleasant than the sight of a friend? What more grateful than to hear his voice, and to behold his worthy actions? And, as for trust and confidence, neither kindred, nor alliance to great persons, nor riches, nor any thing else can so much assure it as generous friendship. And therefore Alexander was not ill-advised, who pointed to his friends when some asked, where was his treasures? There is no such instructor and tutor as a friend. None can persuade us with so much ease; nor can any man reprove us with so little offence; nor do we fear to offend and do amiss upon the account of any one's displeasure so much as his. When he is present he improves our pleasures and augments our prosperity: and as for our cares, he very much lightens them, and eases us of their burden. And what is there that can teach us civility and an obliging conversation so much as he? Observe how willing, or rather glad we are to yield him the precedence in all things. We readily pass by his faults and overlook his errors. We declare our mind to him simply, and without any disguise. We are studious how to requite his favours; and preserve, at least, a grateful remembrance of his good turns. And as for humanity, kindness, and good nature, there is none to whom we extend it with so much alacrity as to a friend: for whom we are not unwilling to expose ourselves to any danger; insomuch that if there were an army of friends listed, a few persons would conquer great multitudes. And therefore, if a man exercise himself in these things diligently towards such a person, and make them familiar and easy to him by means of this friendly sympathy, without all doubt he will be disposed, when occasion requires, to do the same proportionably, and as far as is meet, unto all other men. Behold the benefit of friendship; whose sweet influences all the neighbourhood feels, and fares the better for it. For it is not unworthy to remark, that it is friendship which is the best bond, and ties us fastest to natural relations. Nothing but this can link us to them with a strong affection, and make us truly forward in their service. For whether they be brethren and sisters, or parents and children, or husband and

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wife, if they be not friends also, though they be obedient to good precepts, and perform the duties of their natural relations, they will not discharge them with a cheerful will and with gladness of heart. They may be constrained to serve each other, lest they should seem to neglect their duty; but it is not nearness of blood nor any thing else that will make them freely apply themselves to it as a good that they love, and on which they have set their delight. They must be beholden for this to friendly affection, which alone can make these relations happy: whose power is therefore so predominant, because it is the daughter of the will, the fruit of a voluntary choice. This makes it excel all natural affections as much as the rational and voluntary operations transcend all the other motions in human nature.

"But what is all this, though great and wonderful, to that which may be still said in its praise? We have spoken hitherto but of an human good: that which is the greatest of all, and the most divine thing in it, is not taken notice of; viz. the approaches it makes to the other world. For sincere friendship, contracting the souls of two into one, is the most excellent endeavour of human nature after union and conjunction with God. The union of souls, who are near of kin here, is the preparation for the heavenly union: and it is impossible without this to be a consort of the better beings. The sense of which made the Pythagoreans prefer friendship before all other good qualities, and to call it the bond and combination of all the virtues. For no man that is unjust, or intemperate, or fearful, or ignorant and foolish, can be capable of it. But he that would be a friend must purge himself from all the brutal affections of the soul; and then seek for his like. And when he hath found him, let him embrace that person, as if he had met, according to the fable of Aristophanes[i], with the other half of himself."

But the difficulty, you will say, is in finding him. True; and it requires some judgment to make a right choice. We must deliberate of all things with our friend, but first of our friend

[i] [.. *ἑμαυτῆς παρταμοῦσα θῆμισυ,*—Aristoph. Lysistr. 116, 132.]

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himself. And therefore you must remember the advice of the son of Sirach: *If thou wouldst get a friend, prove him first; and be not hasty to credit him*[1]. For though friendship begin in conversation, where men soon find a mutual liking of each other's persons, words, and actions; yet they cannot so soon discover that likeness of humour and disposition, and that sympathy in desires, which hath the greatest power to unite souls. Insomuch that when by continuance of conversation and mutual liking, and happy agreement in all things, they are made one, the state of things is so altered, that, as at the first the person was liked for what he said or did, now the speeches and actions shall be liked because they are said and done by that person.

But I shall scarce say any thing new in this argument, (of which you know where to find a larger discourse,) and therefore I shall only add this, which is suitable to the business in hand. When you want such an one, let him not be a person that is sad and melancholy, or that loves always to be complaining; for, though he be never so honest and faithful, he will prove but an heavy companion. And on the contrary, one that is too merry and jocund will be no less disagreeing to a serious spirit; and be apt to offend more by his levity and imprudence than he gives content by his liberty and mirth. The happy mixture of both these humours, which will serve for a remedy to each other, compounds that person after whom we inquire. Just as the Romans (it is observed by an ingenious person) esteemed best those tribunes who testified most inclination to the senate; and among the senators thought those the best who favoured most the people's side: so it seems that the best of the pleasant humours are those that come nearest to the melancholy; and the best of the melancholy, those that approach nearest to the pleasant. For where there is this temperature, the first sort will be more discreet and prudent; and the latter less austere and incompliant. And if such a person have a quick sense of divine matters, and be of a pitiful and sympathising disposition, free from envy, patient of labours, and temperate in his pleasures; if he have done us good before he was asked, and when he hath done it keeps it as a secret,

[1] Ecclus. vi. 7.

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and speaks not of it, (which, Aristotle observes [k], is a sign he doth it for our sake, and for no other end,) you may repose the greater confidence in him, as one that is both more able and more willing to do you service.

And therefore, when you have found such an one, think you have found great riches, though you should be never so poor. Great riches, did I say? Rather the greatest treasure in this world. For if a man be more worth than all the world, (as our Saviour supposes [l],) then he is the most wealthy person who entirely possesses a worthy man that is like himself. And there is no way to acquire such a possession but only this. For though a slave or a servant be ours, yet they are so but in part. The first gives us power over him out of fear, and the second for reward: but it is a power over their bodies only, and not over the men. Because neither fear of punishment will tie up a slave from rebellious thoughts, nor hope of reward oblige a servant to a cheerful obedience in his will. He only hath entirely gained a man, and so added to himself something better than any possession in this world, who enjoys a friend; and hath won an absolute power over the heart and affection of another person. This is a rich man indeed, especially when the person he enjoys is one of real worth; having a mind stored with the treasures of Divine wisdom, and an heart full of the love of God. Otherways it must be confessed a man loses by this gain, and hath the less by this accession of seeming riches. It was an audacious fancy of Boccalin's, and an unjust estimate which he made, when (in his balance wherein he weighs all the states of Christendom [m]) he supposes England, which he throws into the scales for a counterpoise to France, to weigh the lighter upon the addition of Scotland to it. But if we conceive the like balance for our purpose, we shall find it too true, that he who contracts a friendship with a prating companion, or a person of no inward worth and value, will feel himself the poorer and the weaker (when he comes to weigh what he hath got) for his pretended increase; and the annexing of a friend will be an heaviness, and not a refreshment to his mind.

[k] L. ii. Rhetor. cap. 4. [§ 29.] [l] Luke ix. 25.

[m] ["The political Touchstone," translated by Henry earl of Monmouth, p. 265. fol. Lond. 1674.]

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Whoso feareth the Lord, therefore, *shall direct his friendship aright* (as the son of Sirach speaks): *for as he is, so shall his neighbour* (*or familiar*) *be also*[n]. God loves ever, as the ancient Greek saying was, to bring like to like. He will guide a good man in his choice, and lead him by the hand to one that is good: in whom he will make account he hath found such a plentiful fortune, that he will not be content to forego it, and take his portion in some other goods. For you may trust the same wise man, *nothing doth countervail a faithful friend, and his excellency is unvaluable*[o]. It is a great comfort to us but to think that we have such a treasure: for we receive no small benefit by him, even when he is only the companion of our thoughts, and is not otherwise present with us. And therefore, *change not a friend for any good by no means: neither a faithful brother for the gold of Ophir*[p]. Covet his company above all others; and do not think you can press too near him, or be too familiar with him. Love him exceedingly; and be not willing on any occasion to be divided from him. There can be no danger you should clash by being ever together: for, as one of the Hebrews excellently expresses it, "A needle's eye is not too strait for two friends; and all the world is not wide enough for two enemies[q]." And if you must live at a distance from him, be not jealous of him, nor suspect his constancy. For solid love, whose root is virtue, can no more die than virtue itself; as Erasmus excellently speaks, in a letter of his to one of our countrymen[r]: "When covetousness," saith he, "makes men friends, their love and their gain must end together. And they whom pleasure allures to friendship will make an end of loving when they are satiated with it. And lastly, they who have a great kindness one for another out of a childish forwardness, or a juvenile heat, will forsake one another with the same levity that they embraced. Our kindness relies on stronger pillars; for it was neither hope of gain, nor pleasure, nor youthful affection, but an honest love of wisdom and our common studies which joined us together. For good men are linked and chained to each other by their admi-

[n] Ecclus. vi. 17.
[o] Vers. 15.
[p] vii. 18.
[q] [Apophthegm. Arab. lib. iii. 123. ad calc. Vit. Mosis, per Gaulmyn; et apud Orell. Opusc. &c. p. 491.]
[r] Lib. ix. Epist. 12. [al. Epist. 21. to Thomas Grey, dated Paris, 1497. Opp. tom. iii. col. 22 A.]

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ration and esteem of the same things. And since the study of virtue is not subject to those alterations and changes of fortune that other things undergo, the benevolence of good men must needs be perpetual, and is not in danger to suffer that decay which is wont to be the fate of vulgar friendship." But that it may be the better preserved and maintained, it is necessary that friends frequent the company and conversation of each other as much as they can. For, as Themistius well notes, "Exercise is all in all things: and mutual conversation, or correspondence, is the exercise of friendship[s]."

But it is time to make an end of this, which I have the longer continued for the reason now named; because the writing of all this is a good exercise of my friendship to you. Let me only cast in this one rule at the bottom of it. It is good to observe, when any chilness and heaviness creeps upon you, from what quarter it comes. I mean, you must follow the stream backward to the fountain, and inform yourself of the cause of the alteration. If it be too much company; then, as soon as you can, seek retirement, and betake yourself to private meditation. If too much solitariness; then find out some agreeable company, or run to your friend. If the change of weather, then wait, if there be no other relief, till it change again. If you know not what, then believe you shall find a remedy in God's goodness, you know not how. And it may give you some pleasure perhaps, when you are most indisposed, as to think of your friend, so to send up this short prayer to heaven for him, and for all those that heartily love you, and to hope that they also are making the same address upon your account. I put them all together indistinctly; it is in your power, at any time, to make it as particular as you please.

A PRAYER.

THOU art love, O God, and art to be infinitely loved above all things. Blessed be thy goodness, who wouldst have us dwell in love; that we may dwell in thee, and thou in us. Blessed be thy goodness, that I am capable of such happiness; especially of loving so great a good as thyself, who art the fountain of all other good, from

[s] Orat. 3. [*Εἰ γὰρ τὸ πᾶν εἰς ἅπαντα ἡ μελέτη, καὶ φιλίας μελέτην νομιστέον τὴν συνουσίαν*,—Orat. 22. p. 334.]

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whom comes every good and perfect gift. To thee I owe my health, my peace, my plenty, my wit, and all other endowments, either of my body or of my mind. I am exceedingly indebted to thee for the inconceivable felicity which thou hast put me in hope of in the other world; and that thou art pleased to let me begin it here, in the company of good men, especially in the love of kind and faithful friends.

What am I, O God, that thou shouldst make me so happy as to lodge me in the dearest affection of any pious breast? What am I, that thou shouldst refresh my wearisome pilgrimage with such delightful society; and shouldst tie any heart so fast to mine, that I should have the benefit of another soul besides mine own, to counsel, assist and comfort me; to take an equal share with me in all the good and evil things of this life?

I thank thee again, O my God, and can never thank thee enough, for this and all other thy gifts wherewith thou hast enriched me: beseeching thee that I may have the grace to improve and make the best use of this blessing to my further increase in wisdom and goodness, which are the greatest treasures of all. Fill my mind with the noblest thoughts, that I may have something worthy to communicate and impart to that soul which enlightens mine. Inspire my heart with the devoutest affections, that I may redouble the warmth I receive from thence; and inflame it with a greater zeal to all good works. O that I may feel myself disposed and inclined, by a particular love to some, to be kind and loving to all other men; and especially to love thee and our blessed Lord the more, my best and my eternal Friend. Raise me, I beseech thee, hereby to the highest pitch of heavenly love; that I may imitate the blessed beings above, and begin the happiness wherein they live. May the strength of my affection to those who are dear to me, and my delight to serve them, and my easiness to comply with them, make me of one mind and spirit and will with thee, my most gracious God: so that my love to thee may grow more powerful and fervent, and my obedience become more free and cheerful, more ready and forward, more faithful and constant, fuller of complacence and entire pleasure and joy in thy service. May the benefit of that sweet company I have along with me make me tread the more evenly, and be the more unwearied, and travel the faster and more willingly during my whole journey through this world. And may our hearts be so inseparably knit in the purest love and kindness, that no accidents, no jealousies

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may disturb and discompose our friendship: but every thing more confirm and strengthen it, by making us feel the need and comfort of it.

And let me beseech thee to bestow upon those to whom I am united in friendly affection all that I can desire for myself: an healthful body, a long life, a clear understanding, a ready apprehension, an exact prudence, a virtuous will, an unwearied diligence, a constant cheerfulness, a sweet and obliging behaviour, an useful conversation, and good success in all their undertakings. Requite all their kindnesses to me in multitude of blessings; and above all with a sense of thy divine favour, with abilities to do much good, and with the perpetual joy and comfort of the Holy Ghost.

O blessed Lord, hear all their own prayers. Hear them for themselves, and for me also. And stir us up all to pray with greater ardency; with a more zealous affection to thy honour and each other's good; and with a most inflamed desire to be as like thee as possibly we can. That, after a constant and hearty friendship here in this world, we may have a comfortable departure out of it; and rest in a joyful hope to meet together in the other life, and embrace in the bosom of our blessed Lord, Christ Jesus. Amen, Amen.

SECT. XI.

In the next place, I must exhort you to exercise a great faith in God's good providence, which rules in all affairs. This is of great force to banish all perplexing thoughts; and consequently to make you of a cheerful spirit, and to be good company for yourself when you are alone, or about your necessary employments. And it hath not only this oblique aspect upon our souls, to defend them from that heaviness and sadness which is too apt to oppress them; but is of a more direct and manifest influence to comfort and enliven them on all occasions: by removing, that is, those impediments out of the way, which are a clog and a burden to our spirits, and by begetting likewise an higher faith in God's goodness to our better part, which takes such care of our lower concernments. For what is it that makes our heart unwilling to go to God, and to wait upon him, as Mary sat at our Saviour's feet, but the multitude

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of businesses wherewith, like Martha, we encumber and trouble ourselves? We imagine we can never take care enough about those things; and when we have done our best, still we remain solicitous about the success. And so our souls being already filled and crowded with these thoughts, there is no room left to admit of any other till they be thrust out.

And suppose now our own conscience begin in this case to reprove us, and bid us go to our God; yet if it be that only which urges us, and not a quiet faith in his good providence, how do we hear those things calling us off again, and inviting, nay drawing our hearts to them, as being indeed their own? It is nothing else that distracts us but these cares; which are not ejected by faith, but only silenced and stilled a little by natural conscience, which tells us we do amiss. Or if they have lain quiet a while, and given us leave to pray to God, and think of better things; how easily do they thrust out all our good meditations and pious affections when they return again! Nay, how do they eat up and prey on the very soul itself, as well as on all the good notions which are within it!

If we be necessarily engaged then in more affairs than willingly we would, it is as necessary we should be strongly persuaded of the care which God takes of all things, that they shall go well with those who trust in him. That so we may use but a moderate diligence, and not trouble ourselves about issues and events: and that we may save abundance of time for better thoughts; and that these affairs may not take up our hearts, both while we are in them, and when we are out of them too. That is too much familiarity with them, when they will never let us alone. And we ought to endeavour that, though they employ our minds for many hours, yet, when we have done our work, they may not then engross our time also.

The care of religion is great enough; we need not take upon us the care of the world too. With what reason do we complain that we find it difficult to govern ourselves, when, it seems, we think ourselves meet to govern this world and all? No wonder that we are weary of our work, when we have not only our own to do, but will needs undertake God's work like-

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wise. We may well sigh and be discouraged when we carry such a vast burden upon our shoulders. There is no end of these cares; which intermix themselves not only with our particular businesses, but trouble us continually with sad and fearful thoughts about the affairs of nations, and the state of the public, wherein our private wealth is embarked. And this is the mischief of it, that when we are discouraged by this means, it is a sin, and not merely our misery: because we will meddle with more than belongs unto us. We put ourselves to an unnecessary pain, to put ourselves out of the favour and care of him who would ease us of this burden, by casting it upon his merciful providence. It is an uncomfortable and a sinful condition; which is aggravated by this, that it is a needless and a bold intrusion into his business who governs the world. It is as if I should be very solicitous whether the sun will shine tomorrow or not, when I have occasion to stay all day about my affairs at home.

Let us do what concerns us, and leave God to dispose of all the rest. And let us believe that he will assist us in our despatches; and a great deal the more if we will not stretch ourselves to meddle beyond our line. He will help us to do what we ought, when we do no more than we should: when we are not oppressed, I mean, with fear that we shall not be able to go through our employments; and when we are not too careful what will become of them after we have finished our work. God will take care that we shall do them, and that they shall have the best success when they are done. Look upon yourself as a part of the world, and upon God as the Governor of the whole: and then, by faith in him, make yourself (as it were) a part of himself; that so he may have a particular concernment in your affairs. Look upon yourself not only as one of his family, and therefore under his general providence; but also as one of his children, for whose good he will more than ordinarily provide: and be always confident he will provide the better for you, because you trust him, and leave yourself wholly to his wisdom and kindness.

I could entertain you here with a delightful discourse on this argument, were it not that I would not burden you, as I

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said before, with too great a book. Let me only advise you of this, which shall excuse me from adding a prayer at the end of this discourse, especially since you know where to find one in another place; that as it is most for our ease to recommend all we have and do to God's good providence, and resolutely to rest satisfied in what he determines; so the most effectual course to obtain this resignation to him, and confidence in him, is rather to exercise it in our devotions, by acts of resignation and expressions of our trust in his great goodness, than to be petitioning him continually to bestow upon us this grace. Say therefore with the heartiest affection, upon all occasions, in the words of David:

Thou art my hope, O Lord: thou art my trust from my youth. I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever. Mine eyes are unto thee, O God the Lord: I will hope continually, and will yet praise thee more and more. What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God, in him will I trust. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes. I will therefore *trust in the Lord, and do good: I will commit my way unto him, that he may bring it to pass*[b].

Behold, O Father of mercies, how entirely I confide in thee. I absolutely resign myself and all I have unto thee. I rely upon thy bounty for what thou judgest fit and needful for me. Thy goodness is the greatest treasure; thy truth and faithfulness is my best security; thy gracious promises and careful providence is my comfort; thy wisdom is my satisfaction in all events and accidents; thy power is my support, protection, and safeguard. Lead me whither thou pleasest; and I will follow thee with a cheerful heart. I refuse nothing which comes from thy hands, O most loving Father. I submit to thy orders; and hope that *all things shall work together for my good.* And I trust in thy grace, that I shall always do as I do now; steadfastly adhering thus unto thee, and never suffering any thing that befalls me to pull me away from this humble faith

[b] Psalm lxxi. 5, 14; lii. 8; cxli. 8; lvi. 3; xci. 2; cxviii. 8, 9; xxxvii. 3, 5.

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in thy wise and almighty goodness; to which I refer myself, now and ever.

And the more to awaken you to this, let me tell you, my friend, that we find examples of it even in the heathens themselves, who, in a strange fit of devotion, have sometime cried out on this fashion:

"O man, what dost thou? Why dost thou not free thyself from all this trouble? Adventure at last, with eyes lifted up to God, to say unto him, Use me at thy pleasure, O God, for the time to come. Thou hast my perfect consent. I am of the same mind that thou art. I have a mind to nothing but what thou thinkest good. Wilt thou have me bear an office, or shall I lead a private life? Must I stay, or must I fly? Shall I be poor, or shall I be rich? I am ready to obey. I will defend thee against all the world. I will apologise for thy providence about these things to everybody. I say that all is good, because thou art so[c]."

Thus they exhorted men to follow God cheerfully, in a belief that he is wise and good. For we can never be happy, said they, if we follow him sighing and groaning, as a man doth one that is stronger than he, who pulls him after him when he hath no mind to go. "Let us begin every thing (saith the same philosopher in another place[d]) without too much desire or aversation. Let us not incline to this or to the other way; but behave ourselves like a traveller, who, when he comes to two ways, asks him whom he meets next which of those he shall take to such a place, having no inclination to the right hand rather than to the left, but desiring only to know the true and direct way that will carry him to his journey's end. Just so must we come to God, as to a guide; as to one who shall dispose of our motions as he pleases. We must not look about us, and desire of him this or the other thing which we fancy. We must not direct him what course he should take with us, nor desire him to show us this rather than that, but embrace that which he proposes, and desire only he will conduct us in the right way to happiness. This is our duty and

[c] Arrian. Epict. lib. ii. cap. 16. [p. 217.] [d] [Lib. ii. cap. 9. p. 186.]

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our safety: whereas now you shall see men run to him, and say, Lord, have mercy upon me; deliver me from such and such a thing. Wretch that thou art! wouldst thou have any thing but what is best? And who can tell what that is? Is there any thing best but that which seems so to God? Why then dost thou endeavour, as much as in thee lies, to corrupt him who is to judge; and to seduce him who is thy counsellor; and to move him by thy cries to do otherways than he thinks good?" Cease these clamours, and do not urge him to incline to thy desires, but suffer him to follow his own wisdom. It cannot be any delight to him to cross and vex us. If what we are inclined to desire be conformable to his judgment, he will not deny it us merely because we are inclined to desire it; but he will give us that which is good in his eyes, as the holy Scripture speaks; and what would we have more? Will it not suffice us to have our own hearts' desire? And what should that be, if we are well advised, but this; that we may have what unsearchable Wisdom, united with infinite Power and Goodness, shall think to be fittest for us, and most convenient? Of this we need not doubt; and this is sufficient for any man's satisfaction.

SECT. XII.

And, as a means to all this which hath been said in the foregoing advices, I cannot but desire you, in the next place, to receive, as often as you can, the holy sacrament of Christ's body and blood. For there you have an ample testimony of God's tender love to you and care over you. There a number of Christian brethren and good friends meet to rejoice together. There your soul is excited to the noblest thoughts and sublimest meditations of your Saviour's love, and of the purchase he hath made for you: the sight of which will not let you stand in need of being chidden by yourself into the devoutest affections and the most cheerful resignation to him, who, having given so great a gift as his Son to you, will not deny, you may be confident, to bestow lesser benefits, when he sees them expedient for you. In brief; this is an holy feast, where our Lord not only makes you good cheer for the pre-

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sent, but renews your decayed strength, and begets in you a greater liveliness for the future.

One great end of the institution of public feasts, among all nations in the world, was for the maintaining of unity, love, and friendship among the people that lived under the same laws, and for the recreating of those who were tired with their constant labours. And it is the design, we likewise see, of our private feasts; which are times of ease and refreshment for our neighbours, and preserve also good-will among them: according to that of Ben Syra, a famous person among the Jews, "Spread the table, and contention ceases[d]." We are all good friends at a feast; upon which account Plato was of opinion that their gods themselves, in much pity to mankind, whose life is full of labour, did appoint those festival times for them, that they might have a little relaxation, and be encouraged by those public joys to proceed without any murmuring in their several employments[e].

We are very sure that God hath instituted, by his particular command, this holy feast (like to which none ever was, and which we may celebrate as oft as we please) upon the body and blood of his dear Son. Whereby a great love, sure, will be begot in our hearts to him and his service, whose guests we are, and at whose cost the entertainment is made, merely out of his extraordinary grace and royal favour towards us. This sure will be a singular refreshment and restorative to our spirits, when we grow weary, and almost spent in the work of our Lord. The sweetness of this will be like wine to the heart, or like marrow and fatness to the bones. It will stir us up when we are listless; and comfort us when we are sad; and put life into us when we are dead; and make us not only able but willing to be religious, being both our pleasure and our food.

Seneca[f], speaking of times of relaxation and rest from labours, saith, he knew some great men, who once a month would

[d] [Pirke Avoth, n. 17. apud Orell. Opusc. Gr. Vet. Sent. et Moral. tom. ii. p. 450.]

[e] Θεοὶ οἰκτείραντες τὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων, &c.—Lib. 2. de Leg. [p. 653 d.]

[f] L. de Tranq. Animi. [cap. 15. §. 13.]

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give themselves a day of play, and others that every day would allow some hours wherein they would not so much as write a letter, or meddle with any thing that had the show of business. If we in like manner did, though not every day, yet every month, take this sweet repast; if out of love to Christ, and consideration of our own necessities, we did lay aside all other thoughts, and give up ourselves to those delightful meditations which here present themselves unto us; it would ease us of many cares and troubles, and make us more cheerfully do the will of God at other times, and dispose us to attend the whole business of religion as the pleasure rather than the labour of our life.

But if you be cast into a place where you have not the opportunity so frequently to celebrate the remembrance of Christ's death, by receiving the outward and visible signs and pledges of his divine grace, then you may the oftener communicate with him spiritually in your own heart, and represent his dying love as lively as you can to it in your retired thoughts: beseeching him to accept of your unfeigned desires to make him your public acknowledgments, and to join with all those pious souls which are then met together throughout the Christian world to show forth his praise, and to offer up themselves in holy love to him and to our blessed Redeemer Christ Jesus. For which purpose I would advise you to make use of all such meditations, prayers, and thanksgivings, as are wont to precede and attend those solemnities; altering only those words which relate to your actual receiving at the table of the Lord.

And doubt not, I beseech you, but your devout addresses to him after that manner, with such pious thoughts, religious affections, and sincere resolutions to continue steadfast in his love and obedience, will be as well accepted by him at that time, as if your body was actually present there where your soul is. The very disposing of yourself for it, and ordering your soul as if you were to receive the holy communion in the same manner that others do, will certainly be a grateful sight to our dear Saviour, who spreads his love all the Christian world over: so grateful, that it will procure his favour as much

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as the doing of the thing itself would, when it is not your fault that it is not done.

Moses, you may remember, appoints in his law, that the paschal lamb (which was offered up in remembrance of God's miraculous mercy, that delivered them by *strength of hand* out of Egyptian slavery, and was a representation of a greater salvation by Christ Jesus, *the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world*) should be taken from the rest of the flock on the tenth day of the month, and so kept up in the house till the fourteenth, when it was to be killed and sacrificed[g]. One reason which the Jewish masters give of it is, that as the people hereby would have sufficient time to examine whether it was a *lamb without blemish*[h]; so by the sight of it, for so long a time in the house, every family might be excited to prepare themselves duly for the holy offices of that great day. And they have formed this maxim thereupon, that he who strenuously prepares himself for observing the precept, or for a good work, is as he who performs the precept. It is no less pleasing to God, they mean, for a man to fit and dispose himself carefully in due time for a pious action, (whereby he shows his mind, his will, and his heart to it,) than the action itself would be; which he may not be able, by reason of sickness, or want of opportunity, to perform. No question, my friend, this aphorism may safely be admitted here. You may rely upon it in the case which I now suppose; and be confident that when you have fitted yourself beforehand, and put all things in such order as you were wont against your approaches to the table of the Lord, he will make account of it as if you had been present there, and actually joined in that sacrifice, which in Christian assemblies was then offered and commemorated. Especially when you do all those things at that time which you would have done there, (excepting the outward receiving of the holy bread and wine,) not omitting the giving something as an alms and oblation; for we ought not now, no more than they did heretofore, to appear before the Lord empty. Oblations were always a part of divine worship, joined with prayer and thanksgiving to God; and were either made

[g] Exod. xii. 3, 6. [h] Ver. 5.

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at the time when the people offered up their supplications and acknowledgments, or vowed to be made when their petitions should be granted. The very making also of such oblations is an act of thanksgiving and pious acknowledgment that we receive all good things from God, and hold them of him; and it hath the effect of a prayer to him, that he will be pleased to continue them; as no doubt he will to all such devout worshippers of him. They may be confident he will not send them away empty, nor let that time be unprofitably employed in his service. You have tried it, I persuade myself, and have found your mind filled with a lively sense of him, and of his incomparable kindness to mankind in Christ Jesus; and your heart replenished with a most ardent love to him, and with a perfect satisfaction in his love; and your whole soul excited to as great care and delight in his service, as the remembrance of such an abundant grace of God will require.

For the benefit of a frequent commemoration, one way or other, of the wonderful love of our Lord in his passion and death for us, cannot fail to be exceeding great; for the better securing of our duty, and the making all those counsels which I have given you the more effectual. It will put you in mind of the worth and dignity of your soul; for which Christ hath done and suffered so much, and on whom he bestows such precious tokens of his love. It will quicken your love to him, which is the life of religion. You shall taste how sweet it is, beyond all comparison, to be religious; whereby we have such hope in God. There you shall be remembered how gainful it is to be good, beyond all the purchases of this world; for Christ imparts himself to you, and all his benefits. There you pray with the greatest devotion, and offer up spiritual sacrifices; and you represent also the sacrifice of Christ, to prevail for blessings for you. And there you are most likely to have the most plentiful communications of God's holy Spirit to you, and to feel your heart dilated in the largest affection unto him. There you confirm your promises to God, and he seals his to you. You cannot there be of another judgment, if you would, than this; that since Christ died to give you life, you ought not *henceforth to live to yourself, but unto him which died for you, and rose again.*

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This, I make no doubt, is one reason why those promises wherein men stand engaged to God are no better performed; because they do not frequently repeat this holy action, in the exercise of which they find their hearts at present fully resolved for God and goodness. This is the cause that they waver again; and all their promises and vows wherein they bind themselves fall off like *cords of vanity*. Whereas, did they upon all occasions communicate with our Saviour, they would find their resolutions grow so strong and steadfast, that no temptation would be able to break them. They would be like bands of iron, or chains rather of gold, that would hold them for ever to their duty. You have heard, I believe, the story of Mithridates; who, by often use of the antidote which he invented, so fortified his spirits, that they resisted the force of poison: insomuch that when, to avoid the Roman slavery, he would have despatched himself by a strong venomous draught, he was not able to effect it. Such a sovereign virtue you will find in the frequent devout receiving of the sacrament of Christ's body and blood. It will secure the life of your soul, confirm your strength, arm you against the bitings of the old serpent, and make it, in a manner, impossible for you to be impoisoned by any naughty affections.

But I have writ so much on this subject in other books already, that I need not say any more of it here. You find, I hope, those treatises useful to the stirring up devotion, and to the making a soul more forward and unwearied in God's service. And there likewise you may meet with a particular prayer for love to the holy communion: wherefore let me proceed, without any stop, to the next advice.

SECT. XIII.

If so be you find your dulness and backwardness to your duty, at any time, continue so long and increase so much that you are afraid there is danger in it, and it may prove pernicious to your soul, then go and take counsel of your spiritual physician, to whom I would have you open your case as plainly

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and fully as you can. There is no small safety in taking a good guide by the hand, at all turns, as you walk in your way to heaven. But then especially it is a necessary piece of wisdom to ask about your way betime when you fear you may be out; and to open your grief at the beginning, when you are wounded with sad apprehensions, before the sore fester.

And if your physician or director could be your friend also, then you would have a threefold advantage for your relief; by the advice of a good man, a friend, and one of God's officers. For, I believe, the same words spoken by him and by another are not the same. They are the more acceptable when they come from a friend, and carry the greater authority from the mouth of God's minister. And therefore be no more backward to reveal the secrets of your soul to him when it is beyond your own skill to heal your distempers, than you are to let a physician know those maladies in your body which must be beholden to him for a cure.

He may furnish you with incentives, if you need quickening: he may revive you when you seem as if you were a dying: he may lend you his supports and comforts when you are feeble and disconsolate: he may help you to distinguish between your fears and real dangers; between your weakness and your wilfulness; between your laziness and your caution; between your bodily and your spiritual infirmities. He will be as a good pilot to steer your soul when you are tossed (like a ship in a dangerous sea and a dark night) in the doubts and wavering of your own mind. Yea, in your best estate, he may be of singular use to you, to keep you within the bounds of prudence, that you be not overborne with the too violent gusts of your own awakened affections and desires. A ship needs a pilot in fair weather as well as in a storm; when it hath a prosperous gale, as well as when it is driven with rough and furious, or with cross winds. She may be in danger then by undiscovered shelves and rocks, or by carrying too great a sail, as in the other case she is by tempests and hurricanes, which tear her sails in pieces. And she must never sail at random, but steer to some certain port; which cannot be performed without his direction, and must be the effect of his

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skilful guidance. Even so it is in the case of our souls; which may be overturned in our spiritual fervours, unless we have some to manage us. When all things favour us, we may strain ourselves too much, and be overset, if there be none to govern our motions. Our zeal may be indiscreet, if we have not a wise and faithful adviser. It may spend itself on little things, or those that are unprofitable, if there be none to give directions about it: or it may drive at no certain end, but float as it happens, unless somebody sit at the stern to order and rule it. We may hoist up too high a sail, and by making too much haste be endangered, if we have not the assistance of one that can judge what we are able to bear, and that shall sometimes slacken us in our too speedy course. In short, a great deal of time may be spent, in some cases, to small purpose, without a greater prudence than our own to husband it and lay it out for us.

I must commend to you therefore the rule which one of the Jewish doctors gave his scholars[i], (half of which you have had already,) Provide yourself of a good teacher and a good schoolfellow. A good guide and a good companion you will find exceeding useful to you: especially the guide, who may sometime be your companion too. Such the holy Scripture calls our *leaders*, (*rulers* we render it[k],) the conductors and governors of our motions in the way to heaven. Those that take us by the hand, as I said, both to guide and to support us by their advice and counsel; by their admonitions and exhortations; by prayer and blessing; by comforts and spiritual consolations. They are ministers of the word; expounders of the holy books; monitors to our duty; mediators with God; and dispensers of the mysteries of salvation. And therefore it will not be safe to travel without the instructions of some or other of them. To whom, when you have committed yourself, look upon him as your good genius or tutelar angel, (by which name the highest ministers of the church are called,) whom you would have as near you as you can; and in whose company, and under whose care and tuition, you may hope to

[i] [Joseph Ben. Johann.] In Pirke Avoth, cap. 1. [Inter Opusc. Græc. Vet. Sent. et Moral. per J. C. Orellium, tom. ii. p. 453.]

[k] Hebr. xiii. 17.

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arrive in safety at your journey's end. To him it will be necessary to repair on all occasions, that he may instruct and teach you in that whereof you are ignorant; or awaken you when you are sleepy; or refresh and cheer you when you are weary; or cure you when you are sick and ill at ease; or resolve you in your doubts; or quicken your dulness; or bridle your fervours: in short, that he may illuminate your mind to make a difference between truth and falsehood, reality and appearance, good and evil; and excite your will to embrace the one and refuse the other with a constant affection.

For suppose (to give an instance) any man should make a tender to you of some principles, which he labours to prove you ought to receive as articles of the Christian faith; how can you be secure that you shall not drink in some poisonous conceits under the sugared name of truth, unless you take advice of those that have their senses more exercised to discern than yourself? And so, in all other cases, know for certain, you will never be so well able to instruct and counsel yourself as they; never so well understand the sacred books as by the help of their interpretations; nor be so well satisfied you do your duty as by consulting with them, whose work it is to search and make inquiries into the laws of God. Every man may know so much of the law as to keep him from quarrelling or trespassing upon his neighbours: but he will not depend upon his own knowledge in every thing that concerns his estate, especially when any part of it is in dispute, or he would have it well settled according to his heart's desire. And though some ordinary things in physic, the virtues of certain herbs and plants, may be understood by anybody with a little pains; yet none will trust themselves or their next neighbours in case of a sharp disease, but send, if they be able, for a man of the greatest repute in his faculty, to look after their health, and administer medicines to them. Just thus it is in the case of our souls: it is too much presumption and careless confidence to rely upon our own counsel alone in the settlement of our everlasting estate, or in the cure of those disorders and distempers in our mind which threaten danger; we ought to take good advice, and, for fear of mistake, have the judgment of some more skilful person to secure us as well as our own.

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And indeed, from hence you may learn what account God makes of your soul, (and how highly it ought to be valued by yourself,) for the safety of which he hath made such careful and plentiful provision: having, next to the gift of his Son, and of the Holy Ghost, settled an order of men to minister unto souls; to look after them, and see that they do not perish for want of instruction or good advice. As he would have our Saviour lay down his life for them, so he hath thereby made him a most compassionate High Priest, and preferred him to a kingdom; which is nothing else but an office, power, and authority to take care of souls, and do them good continually. By virtue of which he hath committed authority unto others in a perpetual succession, that they should *watch for men's souls*, as the apostle to the Hebrews speaks: declaring to them their own worth and his love; engrafting that word in them which is able to save them; calling them to repentance; establishing them in the faith; encouraging their progress in virtue; ordering their goings; feeding them with his blessed body and blood; absolving them from their sins; assisting them in their last agony, that they may finish their course with joy.

This is the effect of a peculiar kindness to souls. He hath not dealt so with our bodies: for we never heard of a company of men appointed by God to invent pleasures, and contrive ways for the feasting of our senses. There are none separated and set apart by him to teach the world how to get riches, and improve their estates, and fill their coffers. But all the wisdom of Heaven is employed to other purposes: having ordained men to teach us how to live above those things, and to replenish our minds with his knowledge, and our wills with his love. This he hath made their constant function and perpetual employment to the world's end.

And therefore be not slack to use their ministry, nor doubt of the blessing of God upon it. But have so much love to your soul, as to apply yourself to them for assistance who are particularly concerned to give it: and so much love to God, as to be confident he will make those means successful which he hath particularly ordained for your good.

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A PRAYER.

I ADORE thee, O Lord, the Father of mercies, who hast designed mankind to the greatest felicity in everlasting life: and hast not left us, in pursuance of it, to the uncertain guesses of our own mind; but sent thy dear Son into the world, both to assure us of that happiness, and to direct us by his holy doctrine and example, how we may attain it. Blessed be *the tender mercy of our God, whereby the Sun of Righteousness hath visited us from on high, to give light to them that sat in darkness, and in the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.* Great is thy love, O Lord, which, after he had left the world, sent his apostles and other ministers of thy word, to be the messengers of reconciliation and peace, the leaders and conductors of souls, the stewards of thy mysteries, and the guides unto blessedness. Great is thy love; which to this day continueth a merciful care over souls, in providing a succession of faithful pastors and instructors to teach us our duty, to reduce us when we go astray, to resolve us when we doubt, to help us when we are weak or weary; and by their counsels, admonitions and comforts, to bring our souls back again safe to thee, the Father of spirits.

I see, O Lord, how dear and precious our souls are in thy sight; for which our Saviour hath done and suffered so much, and employeth still the care and pains of so many persons to take the charge and oversight of them, and guide them unto their rest. My soul blesses thee, and all that is within me praises thy holy name, as for all other thy benefits, so for the many good instructors I have met withal, the many good lessons I have been taught, and the pious counsels and advices I have received. I thank thee for putting me into the hands of such friendly and skilful guides; and that I have never hitherto wanted some to conduct me in all the dangerous and troublesome passages of my life. Be pleased still to favour me with the continuance of the like happiness: enduing me with wisdom to choose and grace to follow such a person, who may, on all occasions, clearly enlighten my understanding, settle my doubts, confirm my resolutions, quicken my endeavours, direct my zeal, keep all my passions in order, and secure my goings in thy paths. That so I may neither miss my way, nor proceed with irregular motions, nor be discouraged in it: but hold an even, steady, and constant course in well doing, till they to whom thou hast committed the care of me deliver me up in peace and safety into the hands of the great Shep-

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herd and Bishop of our souls, Christ Jesus. To whom be glory and dominion for ever. Amen.

SECT. XIV.

But when you are in your best moods, and think yourself furthest off from danger, it will be good to exercise an holy fear and jealousy over yourself; lest you should give way to any thing which may make you grow worse. Remember how false and treacherous the conquered enemy is; and therefore it ought to be narrowly watched. Though it promised fair, remember that you must not trust it without a constant guard. And mark the least beginnings of an evil, for fear, if they be slighted as small faults, they draw you into a greater. Though we must not be dejected for our little irregularities, yet we must not pass them over neither without a serious observance. If a father laugh or smile when he chides a wanton child, it is so far from being a check to his follies, that it doth the more embolden him to play those idle tricks for which he is reproved. And so it is to be feared we shall find ourselves disposed, if we be not in good earnest displeased at ourselves for any thing that borders upon vice, and do not reprove ourselves seriously for making too much use of our liberty. We may be in danger, by this mildness and gentleness, to take the boldness to proceed to further transgressions.

But I may seem to forget to whom I write; and considering what a great quantity you have of this fear, I had need give it a large dash of some other mixture; lest it turn into timorousness, and hurt your soul. And this indeed is the skill we should all learn; to behave ourselves with such caution and evenness in the exercise of fear, that it do not make us superstitious, nor, through a despondency of spirit, cast us into that dulness and weakness which we are striving to avoid. You must let your fear therefore be tempered with so much of a divine faith, that, like heat and moisture, they may make up one healthful constitution.

Faith in God, I say, is another thing that you must carefully

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and daily foster in your soul, if you would be constant in his service. Be verily persuaded that he loves you infinitely more than you love him; and therefore is more desirous than you can be to see you do well and continue in well doing to the end. Think that his eye is upon you; that his arm is under you; that he is as near to you as you are to yourself: for, in all regards, we *live and move, and have our being in him.* Think therefore that you behold him, the Father of lights, sending in rays of light into your mind, as you see the sun looking in at your windows, and filling the room with its cheerful beams: and that you feel him pouring in life constantly into your will, as the heart spurts out blood into all the arteries of the body. Never entertain such a thought of him, as though he was willing to desert you, and cast you out of his friendship; now that he hath done so much for you, and you have been so long acquainted. By no means hearken to any jealous thoughts, that are but whispered, of his goodness; whatsoever the jealousies be which you have of your own inconstancy.

Was it not he that called us when we were in horrid darkness and forgetfulness of him, bending all our thoughts and desires to our own ruin and his dishonour? Was it not he that assisted us to get the victory over so many enemies? Who but he is it that hath hitherto enabled us, in our study to live virtuously and please him in all things? What should now move him to alter his mind? After such numerous tokens of his love, what is it should make him hate us? Will he bear with no weaknesses? or shall a fault that we have committed wholly alienate his affection from us? If when we lay in our filthiness he took pity on us, pulled us out of the mire, and laid us in his bosom; now that we are washed all over will he shake us off, and cast us out of his embraces because our feet (as our Lord speaks) still need some washing? He that invited us so kindly when we were strangers, and took us into his house, and made us become not his servants only, but his children; will he now turn us out of doors presently, and thrust us into the wide world again, because we have offended him? When we had no strength, did he inspire us, and hath he thus long tenderly followed us, and trained us up in his service? and will he now forsake the conduct of us, and abandon us to the mercy of our

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enemies? Why did he then with so much labour purchase our love? Why hath he been at such vast expense on our account? Why would he take such incredible care to lose us, when we might have perished by his no care of us?

O unworthy thoughts of so gracious a Master, so loving a Father, so tender a Husband! Rather let us think the sun may refuse to rise and shine upon us, or the sea may be dried up, than imagine that he should be willing to cast us into our former darkness, and not let the current of his grace still run towards us. Let us at least make him as good as an ordinary mother, who not only suckles her child when it is young, and endures many tedious days and wearisome nights in the midst of its cries and froward humours; but likewise loves and looks after it when it can go alone, and make some provision for its own good and safety. Far be it from us to make him like the silly birds, that attend their young no longer than they are in the nest, and leave them to shift for themselves when they have once taught them to use their wings. Will not the divine love, think you, endure far more untowardness, peevishness and waywardness in our hearts, when our grace is but in its infancy and childhood, than a tender mother endures in her little one before it can speak and tell its mind? And will he not bear then with some indiscretions or faults afterwards, but cast us out, as Sarah did Ishmael and the handmaid, into a wilderness, where there is no provision for us? Nay, will he that took compassion on that poor outcast and his mother, to whom he sent his angel for their preservation, leave his dear children to become a prey to the wild beasts of the desert? Far be it from the Father of mercies, the God of love and all comfort, to deal so with us.

And let me tell you, that the more confidence we repose in his love, the more he hates to use us so unkindly. What man is there so hard-hearted, that, seeing his neighbour ready to fall and hurt himself, will deny him his help, and withdraw his support; especially when he falls into his arms, and desires wholly to lean himself on his breast? Who can endure to fail a man, and let him be undone, that comes and puts his estate and his life into his hands, though otherwise he be undeserv-

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ing? If a poor bird fly to us for protection from the ravenous kite that persecutes it, can we find in our hearts to throw it into its enemy's claws? Who can then suspect that God, who hath declared himself otherways willing to do us good, should then cast us off and forsake us, when we altogether rely upon his goodness, clemency, wisdom, and power to help and relieve us? When we fly to none else for shelter; when we say, as David doth[1], *Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defence. The rock of my strength and my refuge is in God:* who can let it enter into his thoughts, that then he will turn away from us, and suffer us to be *greatly moved?*

But more than this; there is no man among us, unless he will make himself most infamous, can fail and desert another, who, upon his earnest invitation, and kind proffers of security, comes and puts himself wholly under his wing, and trusts to his covert for safe protection. Men are not arrived yet at such inhumanity, but are ashamed to be so barbarous as to inveigle men with fair promises and shows of kindness to come and take sanctuary with them, and then betray them. Let the Lord of heaven then never be held in the least suspicion of such unfaithfulness as well as unkindness to us, whom he hath invited and persuaded to confide and put their whole trust in him. Never so much as imagine that he will disappoint those good souls that rely and depend on nothing in their obedience to him but his undoubted promises. Let it not come into any of our minds, (or let the thought of it be abhorred and rejected with indignation,) that after he hath made us such assurances of his care and love, he will break his word and let us fall when we have fast hold of his mercy and his truth. Men may prove false and treacherous; there may be such monsters, whose kindnesses are but flatteries, and their invitations but ensnarements; but faithfulness itself cannot be unfaithful; God's goodness cannot mock us; his infinite perfections will not let him have any unworthy designs upon us or anyways delude us.

What! deceive a confident, and fail a friend? Such God is

[1] Ps. lxii. 1, 2, 7.

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pleased to esteem us when we devote ourselves in love to his service: which is a further consideration, of greater moment than any else, to secure us of his faithful kindness. For if our heart will not serve us to let a poor neighbour fall to the ground when we can easily support him, much less to desert one that hath entirely trusted us with all he hath, and who, by our desire, reposed this trust in us; then least of all can we be inclined to abandon the care of him, who, by long conversation with us and experience of us, is become our friend. This gives him a new and a stronger title to all that we can do for him; and, because we have been so kind, will be the best reason why we should continue to be so still. Consider but the natural works of God; doth he begin to form the life of a child in the womb and leave it before it become a perfect creature? yea, if it be but a chicken in an egg, doth he not bring it to its full growth, unless (in either case) something extraordinary hinder? Why then should we dream that he will desist, and forsake the formation of his Son Christ in us, the lively image of whom he hath already begun? It must be some strange violence which we offer to ourselves, some very ill use of our souls, and great straining of the conscience, that can make us miscarry.

I have asked the question, you know, elsewhere[m], and let me briefly repeat it again in this place: Who was it that bid St. Peter to walk upon the water? At whose command did his body, though apt to sink like a stone, tread in that soft and yielding element? Was it not our Saviour that said, *Come?* and that was enough. His word made the floods that they could not swallow him up. He felt no more difficulty or danger in those paths, as long as he believed our Saviour's power, than if he had walked on dry land. Then it was that he began to sink, when his faith turned into fear. His heart sunk before his body, and his courage yielded before the waters. Just so it is with us, who are compounded of earthly materials, and yet are bid to wade through this world to heaven. A miracle it is that our dull nature, which hangs downward, and is inclined to sink into the soft delights of sense, should be able to look up above, and not be swallowed up in a gulf of sin and misery. For this we stand indebted to the Divine power up-

[m] [Jesus and the Resurrection, part i. chap. vii. vol. ii. p. 547.]

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holding and aiding our weakness. And he that hath called us, as he did Peter, and bid us come to him, continues his mighty word with us, and bids us go on in the ways of his commandments. What need we fear, as long as we have him in our company to go along with us? And when is it that we are in danger of drowning, but when we grow diffident, (as St. Peter did,) and our minds are fixed more upon the wind and the waves, the hardships and the hazards that threaten us, than upon the grace and power of our Lord that takes the charge of us?

And yet if, through our fearfulness and distrust, we chance to stagger and waver in our resolution, we are not utterly undone, but have a remedy very near us. Our Lord will put forth his hand, even in the midst of these fears, and hold us up, as he did that fainthearted disciple of his, when we cry out to him in his words, *Lord, save me.*

It is stoutly resolved by an heathen, that, seeing all disorders in man arise partly from the weakness of those reasons that are in his mind, and partly from the excessive abundance of gross matter to which he is chained; and, seeing those reasons and notions are divine, and near of kin to the gods themselves; the insuperable and irresistible power of the gods will come to the assistance of their kindred, and so revive and renew those reasons, so comfort and cherish their weakness, that they shall be able to conquer the heaviness and dulness of the bodily impediments[m]. Let us much more resolutely conclude, that, seeing our souls (though here in this prison) are the offspring of God, and seeing likewise he is manifested in our flesh, and hath married it (as I may say) to himself, he will mightily encourage and strengthen the one, and help us to disburden the other, and purify both: and that he will never despise the faintest essays of any honest soul that faithfully struggles for greater liberty, but assist it in all its attempts and endeavours to be unloaded and made more free and cheerful in his service. These very motions derive themselves from heaven; and may as confidently expect to be succoured from thence, as a child to receive relief from his parents when he is in distress, and when,

[m] Proclus, l. 1. in Timæum. *Ἀναταγώνιστος ῥώμη τῶν θεῶν ἀναπεσοῖ τοὺς λόγους*, &c. [p. 12.]

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by their order also, he is engaged to apply his weakness to a mighty work, which, without their help, they know cannot be accomplished. It is incredible that the Father of mercies should expose that which is born of him to be undone and perish; which will certainly be the fate of all that is good in us without his constant care and assistance for its preservation. Do not doubt but God will look after his own, and see that the little portion of goodness which is remaining in this world be countenanced and encouraged. In assurance of which, you may address yourself unto him after this manner:

A PRAYER.

O Lord, who hast breathed into me the breath of life, and endued me with an immortal spirit, which looks up unto thee, and remembers it is made after thine own image, and that thou hast sent Jesus Christ from heaven to repair and renew that image in wisdom, righteousness, and holiness; behold with grace and favour the ardent desires which are in mine heart to recover a perfect likeness of thee. By thine almighty love, all praise be unto thee, my mind is already awakened to some sense of thee; and my will overcome to yield up itself entirely to obey thee; and I have been assisted hitherto in performing my duty to thee. Yea, I have tasted so often how gracious thou art, that I account thy service the most perfect freedom, and find that *in keeping of thy commandments there is great reward*[n].

My hope is, that *thou, Lord, who hast never failed those that seek thee, wilt perfect that which concerneth me, and not forsake the works of thine own hands*[o]. It is thee whom my soul seeketh, that I may have a more lively and prevailing sense of thee, that I may most ardently love thee, and constantly adhere to thy will, and do thee honour by a cheerful observance of all thy commands. And from thee it is that I have received these good inclinations and holy desires. They are the fruit of thy love, and therefore cannot but be thy delight; which makes me still trust in thee, that thou wilt rejoice over me, and do me good.

I have thy word to encourage me, upon which thou hast caused me to hope. And I know that *thy word is true from the beginning*; and that *thy faithfulness is unto all generations*[p]. They are not the things which thou hast never promised us that I come to beg of thee, riches, honours, long life, or the rest of the goods of this world

[n] Psalm xix. 11. [o] ix. 10; cxxxviii. 8. [p] cxix. 90, 160.

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(for which I refer myself to thy wisdom, to give me what portion of them thou pleasest); but thy Holy Spirit, which my Saviour hath told me thou wilt as readily give to those that ask it as a tender-hearted parent will give food to his hungry children when they cry unto him. I desire only that thy own life may be nourished and protected in me, and vanquish all its enemies, and be completed in a blessed immortality. I beg of thee more of the grace of humility, of meekness, of temperance, of patience, of brotherly kindness, and of charity. Endue me with moderate desires of what I want, and a sober use of what I enjoy; with more contentedness in what is present, and less solicitude about what is future; with a patient mind to submit to any loss of what I have, or to any disappointment of what I expect; with a pious care to improve my precious time in all other actions of a Christian life; and with a willingness to conclude my days, and return back to thee to be with Christ, which is best of all.

Let, I pray thee, thy merciful kindness, in these things, *be for my comfort, according to thy word unto thy servant. I entreat thy favour with my whole heart: be merciful unto me according to thy word*[q]; which hath pronounced those *blessed* that *hunger and thirst after righteousness*, and promised that they shall be filled. *Fill me*, O Lord, *with the knowledge of thy will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.* Fill me with goodness, and *the fruits of righteousness:* and fill me with *all joy and peace in believing* that thou wilt *never leave me nor forsake me;* but *make me perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle me;* and be *my God for ever and ever, my guide even unto death*[r]. Amen.

SECT. XV.

And now is there any need to use many words, to show how much force there is in the meditation of death to make you lively? It is the common opinion that all things intend themselves more earnestly, and act in the extremity, when they meet with their contrary, which threatens their destruction; as springs are hottest in the coldest seasons, and fire itself most scorching in frosty weather. Even so, if we set death very seriously before our mind, and laid the thoughts of it close to

[q] Psalm cxix. 58, 76. [r] Coloss. i. 9; Phil. i. 11; Rom. xv. 13, 14; 1 Pet. v. 10; Ps. xlviii. 14.

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our heart, would it cause our life to be more full of life. We should gather together all our might, to do as much as we can, if we looked upon ourselves as going to the grave, where there is no work to be done at all.

The mind of man is too apt to feed itself with the fancy of several pleasures that either nature affords or art hath invented: among all which a good-natured mind finds none so delicious as the conceit which frequently starts up in it of the excessive pleasure he should enjoy, were he always in the company of a friend whom he loves entirely, and might they spend their days even as they list themselves, and dispose of all their hours according to their own inclinations. But if a thought of death interpose itself when he is in the height of this delight, it dashes all these fine bubbles of the imagination in pieces: all is gone, and vanishes into a sigh; or there is nothing of them remains but a drop as big as a tear. And therefore, if it be so sharp a curb to the forwardness of our desires, and serve as a bridle to hold in our headstrong passions, we may use it also as a good spur to prick them on when they are too sluggish, and to stir them up when they have no list to move at all.

When we are ready to fall asleep, did we but think of dying, it would make us start and say, Who would sleep and dream away his time in this manner, when, for any thing he knows, he hath but a few sands left in his glass? Death is coming to draw the curtains about me, and to make my bed for me in the dust; awake then, up and be doing, because there is a long night near at hand, wherein we must rest, and not work. And is it not a very great grace, if for so small, so short a work, we shall receive so vast, so long a reward? It is a great shame to stand all the day idle, if it be but for this very reason, that our best diligence, though it could be continued for many more years than it is like to be, can never deserve such a recompense.

Place yourself, therefore, as if you were upon your deathbed, and think with what ardent desires, with what passionate groans, with what an heartful of sighs, you would seek after God, if your soul was just taking its flight out of this body;

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and perhaps this will send it out beforehand in the like sighs and groans, which will help to waft you towards heaven. Just as when a man is to write to the dearest friend he hath in the world, and thinks they are the last lines that ever he shall send him, his very heart dissolves, and drops itself into his pen; so would all our affections melt and flow forth towards God, if we seemed to ourselves as if we should never speak to him more with a tongue of flesh, nor look upon him through these windows of clay, but should shortly dwell in silence, and go down into the house of darkness. O how would our souls *thirst for God* (as David speaks), *for the living God*[z]*!* how much should we love him, and endeavour to confirm our friendship with him! that when our bodies are disposed of into the earth, our souls might still live and rejoice with him in heaven, expecting also a blessed resurrection.

And if you say that in this state of dulness that I am speaking of a soul is fit to think of nothing, this thing will tell you how it alarms the heart, and makes it muster up its thoughts, and collect its scattered forces, that it may be in a readiness to receive the approaches of death, and its assault upon us. And the thoughts of it, at such a time, are the more natural and easy, because there is nothing more like to death than this unactive and sluggish temper, when the soul seems as if it were buried in the body, and entombed already in this vault of flesh.

And it would be very easy to show how much every one of the foregoing counsels would be improved by our frequent conversation, on all occasions, with our graves. It would excite our minds to inquire after another world, and make us very desirous to find it out. It would raise our esteem of the great love of God, who hath given us such assurance of a never-dying life. It would carry away our thoughts from this earth, as not the place of our settled abode. It would presently send them above, and bid them see the pleasures which we do but imagine here, in their full growth and perfection of joy and happiness there. O how delightful would religion and virtue be unto us, which is the only thing we can carry away with us!

[z] [Ps. xlii. 2.]

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how curious should we be to judge aright, that death may not be the first thing that shall undeceive us! how would it open our heart, as I said, to pour out itself in devout affections to God! and what a comfort would these be to us, if the records of them were spread before us at our dying hour! This is so far from being an enemy to cheerfulness, that it is a forcible reason why we should freely enjoy all that God hath given us, because we must shortly leave it. Our friends also we shall therefore be inclined to embrace more ardently, and do them the more good, and covet their company, because we have not long to stay with them. For when I said the thoughts of death are apt to restrain our too forward desires, I did not mean that it checks or abates our love to our friends: no; *Love is strong as death, and hard* (or unyielding) *as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, a most vehement flame*, as Solomon speaks[a]: it burns, that is, like the fire on the altar (for in the Hebrew the last words are, *the flame of God*), which came down from heaven, and never went out. Nothing can conquer it, no, not death, which conquers all flesh. That can only teach us not to place our chief contentment in any thing here, no, not in the best good in this world, though never so dear unto us; because it may shortly leave us only its shadow, the image of it in our memory, which, putting us in mind of our forepast pleasures, will make us so much the more sad, if we have not hope to find that good improved, by its departure from us, in another world. And is not the use of a friend then most visible, when we think of our departure, by whom, as I said in one of the former discourses, we shall still remain with those whom we leave behind? But what friend is there like to our blessed Lord? whose love we shall the oftener remember by commemorating his death, if we think of our own. We cannot choose but be excited to prepare ourselves thereby for an happy and cheerful dissolution. And why should we not trust God with all we have for a little time, whom we must shortly entrust with soul and body to all eternity? But I list not to prolong this discourse with such collections as these; which I will leave to your own thoughts, with this prayer, wherewith you may awaken your mind when you find it necessary:

[a] Cant. viii. 6.

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A PRAYER.

Thou art worthy, O Lord, of all praise, glory, and honour; by whose omnipotent will, and for whose pleasure, all things in heaven and earth were created, and by whose indulgent providence they are continually maintained and preserved. *They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment: as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end*[b]. I prostrate myself before thee in an humble sense that I am but sinful dust and ashes; who have nothing to glory in, neither riches, nor strength, nor wisdom; but only this, (O how happy is it for me!) that I know thee, the ever-living God, the rock of ages, the only solid foundation of our comfort and joy, who when my *flesh and my heart faileth, wilt be the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever*[c].

I am now presenting my soul and body to thee in perfect health; but cannot tell where I shall be the next moment, or whether I shall live to breathe out the desires of my soul once more unto thee. For in thy hand is the breath of our nostrils, and when thou pleasest we are turned to destruction. We dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust; and they are daily crumbling and mouldering away, so that we know not how soon they will vanish and be seen no more. O how serious should the thoughts of this make me in all my addresses unto thee! How dead to all the sinful enjoyments of this world! How holy and pure! How heavenly-minded and spiritual! How ready to do good, and to communicate to others those things which I must shortly leave! How diligent to assure myself thereby of better enjoyments, and to make friends in heaven; that when I go hence I may be received into everlasting habitations!

I see, O Lord, now that I think of my departure, how unprofitable my too many cares are for the things of this life: how vain my eager desires after unnecessary riches and honours: how trifling all my pleasures; and that there is no solid happiness but in thy love, and a pious hope of immortality. O my God, be so good to me as to turn my thoughts frequently toward my latter end; and to fix in my mind a lively sense of the uncertainty of my being, and the fickle-

[b] Psalm cii. 26. [c] lxxiii. 26.

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ness of all things belonging to it. That since I must shortly leave them all, even my dearest friends and kindred, and this body too, (which must be turned into corruption,) I may most zealously endeavour to secure thy love and friendship in a better life, by the constant, cheerful and earnest exercise of all godliness and virtue while I tarry here.

Help me to be as humble and lowly as the dust to which I am going: to bury all anger, hatred, and enmities, since we *must needs die, and be as water spilt upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up again*[d]: to discharge my mind of all superfluous cares, and of immoderate love of dying things: to enjoy them innocently and cheerfully; to do good with them heartily, and to envy no man's greater prosperity: to suffer evil, and to take the loss of them patiently; to admire that mercy which still prolongs so frail a life as mine is: and especially to admire the gracious terms of thy holy gospel, which, for our short labours or sufferings here, hath promised us the reward of an endless life in a better place. Dispose me likewise to be willing to leave this world, and to be always in a readiness for my departure: that I may never be surprised with sudden death, nor obey thy summons with an heavy heart; but freely resign my spirit unto thee who gavest it.

O how much do I desire the continuance of these holy thoughts and inclinations: that so I may have such a love to this world as is consistent with my hope of heaven; and be so busied in earthly affairs, that my heart may be there where my treasure is, and be tied to my friends in such affection that we may not be eternally divorced. And the nearer I draw to that eternal world, O that I may be the more pure and separated from all worldly mixtures; and the clearer sight and prospect I may have of my happiness, and attain the greater assurance of thy love, and be the fuller of joy in hope of thy glory. Pity my present weakness, increase my strength, help me not only to resist, but to overcome all temptations; enable me to discharge the duties of my several relations; prepare me for all varieties of conditions, that in prosperity I may not forget thee, nor imagine in adversity that thou forgettest me, but in all I may be the same, and have the same thoughts of thee, love to thee, and delight in thee, till I come to an unchangeable goodness and happiness with the Lord Jesus. Amen.

[d] 2 Sam. xiv. 14.

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SECT. XVI.

But if you be so much discomposed at any time that you cannot get your thoughts close to this business, nor find any relief in any of the foregoing counsels, I must then, in the last place, send you to a never-failing remedy, which is, to exercise a great deal of patience towards yourself. I am so well assured of your goodness, and that my judgment is not herein blinded by my affection to you, that I dare conclude with this advice: Be content to be dull sometime, and able to do nothing as you would; and yet do not think the worse of yourself for it. But if it do stir up any suspicions in your mind of you do not know what fault, yet never bluster at yourself, but with a calm and gentle spirit suffer this distemper. Look upon yourself as sick, and think that it is not good now to stir any humours. And therefore strive not too much neither with yourself [do not distrust this counsel] when you are thus melancholy, for that will but cast you more into it. You will be the sooner eased, if you do as well as you can; and add not a greater load to your spirit, by your own fretful thoughts at this untoward indisposition.

You must consider that our bodies, being a part of this world, will be obnoxious to those changes which are in things adjacent to them. And that your soul, being united to your body, cannot but feel its vicissitudes: just as when the house smokes, the inhabitant is offended unless he can step out of doors.

Consider also that the same work is not required of a weak and of a stronger person. The Nemalim and the Gemalim (as the Jews speak) must not be alike loaded: that is, the ants cannot carry such a burden as the camels.

You must thank God it is no worse with you; and that you have not quite forgot him. Thank him, I say, that you have any use of patience, and that you are not under an absolute stupidity.

Remember likewise that it will be better with you. As long

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as there is the same sun in heaven, the clouds will be dispersed, and we shall have fair days as well as foul: and as long as our Lord lives and changes not, there shall be a brighter season, and we shall be warm as well as cold.

Think likewise how unworthy the best of us is to live always under the sunbeams. And that as there are many countries more north than England who in the depth of our winter are in a long and dismal night, so there are many souls who are in a colder case, and more remote from the Sun of righteousness than yours is.

But however think, that after you have done what you can, it is the will of God that you should be as you are. And if this dulness please him, it need not displease you.

Remember also, that he is not perfect in patience, who can bear with others, but not with himself.

And again, that there is good reason you should bear with yourself; because, accidentally, this dulness will breed a greater activity when you come out of it: both out of justice, that you may make some recompense for that drowsiness, and out of gratitude to him, by whose goodness you were delivered from it. For nature, you know, instructs us to be very kind to those who have helped us out of a very great distress; and it is not easy to blot their readiness to relieve us out of our memories.

And besides, it is manifest there are some kinds of dulness and indisposition which arise from the mere necessity of nature: with which we can no more reasonably quarrel than we do because it rains or snows, when we would have it fair weather. Can it be expected, for instance, that a woman with child should be so vigorous as she was wont? She must be content, perhaps, to spend that time in vomiting which once she did in praying. It must not put her to pain in this case, that she cannot read or think so long, or with so much delight, or with such clearness of understanding as formerly she could: but she must comply with her condition, and considering no

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more can be done in such circumstances, believe that God requires no more. There is as much reason to be troubled because she hath not wings to fly, or cannot walk now as fast up her stairs as when she had no burden, as to chide herself that she cannot be so earnest, so long, so cheerful as formerly in the performance of holy duties.

There are many cases like to this; in which there is no more caution necessary but to see that too much care of our ease, and indulgence to our present infirmity, (which must at such a time be liberally allowed,) do not tempt us to be negligent in that which it is in our power to perform. We may often retire to God in shorter thoughts, and affectionate longings and pantings after him; and thereby keeping our hearts in a glowing temper, we may prevent that chilness and laziness which otherwise might creep upon us, and make us imagine ourselves less able than we are. And particularly I would advise you, on such occasions, to lift up your soul frequently to God in earnest desires, beseeching him to preserve you from cheating yourself; and that he would help you to discern clearly when it is the flattery, and when it is the mere weakness of flesh and blood, that hinders you from doing as you were wont.

When you cast a glance, I say, towards heaven, and send up a sigh thither now and then, (as you are able,) let this be one of your desires; that God would be so gracious as to give you to feel plainly, when mere necessity requires your attendance on your body, and when it calls for more than it needs. For he loves that in every thing we should make known our requests to him, and will certainly some way or other satisfy your mind in such concernments. And when you have used the best judgment you have and can procure, together with your prayers about them, then I hope you will be cheerful, and let your thoughts trouble you no more. Or if a thought should happen to start up and strike your mind, telling you that you are lazy, yet believe, I beseech you, your more deliberate, and not these sudden conclusions.

There is one case, I know, of this kind, wherein though it be

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certain that it is impossible for us to do as we were wont, and that we are not hindered by any fault in our will, but by the mere indisposition of nature, yet it may be hard sometime to avoid dejected and complaining thoughts upon this account: it is in sickness, when the mind necessarily languishes with the body. You may chance then to imagine that some sin or other is the cause of this correction, (and so you have drawn this disability upon yourself,) for which you cannot now be humbled as you desire. But I hope, my friend, that you take such an exact view of your life, that sickness will not let you see any fault that was not visible to you before. And I know you to be wiser than to torment yourself with a fancy that there is some sin lurking in you, though you cannot find it out. But if any thing should discover itself to you which was not so evident before, let me beseech you not to pass any hard censure upon yourself: but to remember that this hath been bewailed whensoever you lamented the general infirmity of your nature, and that now perhaps it is represented to you more ugly than it doth deserve; or if it be not, yet it is sufficient only to beg of God to accept your hearty confession, and your promise of amendment, (when you are able,) and to desire your spiritual guide to be the witness of your sincere resolution, and to give you absolution, and his blessing, and so rest satisfied.

But there may be another reason likewise assigned of our heaviness at certain seasons, which I have not yet named; and that is, the withholding, in a great measure, of that strength and power which was upon us from the Holy Ghost, to raise and elevate us to an high pitch of love, activity, and joy in well doing. For as the help of that doth lift us up above ourselves, so, when it much abates, we are apt to fall as much below ourselves, and to be surprised with sadness and dejection of spirit to see ourselves so strangely changed. And this may be denied us for several causes; either because we have not improved it so well as we might, or because our Lord sees that our nature cannot bear always such extraordinary motions; or that he may make us more sensible of his favours, and raise their price and value in our esteem; or that he may try our strength, as a mother lets go her hold of the child to make it feel its feet; or that he may thereby bow our wills more

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absolutely to his, and break our self-love, which desires nothing but pleasure; or that he may prove whether we will love him for himself, and not for the delicate entertainments which he gives us; or for some such cause unknown to you and me, and everybody else.

And shall we not yield submission quietly to a thing for which there may be so many reasons, and those not at all to our prejudice, but to our profit? Let me say a few words concerning the two last things mentioned, and show you, that if our patience be exercised upon those accounts, it will prove very beneficial to our souls.

I cannot say (as some have done) that we ought not to desire goodness for our own good, but merely because it is pleasing to God. No; this seems to me a very absurd doctrine, and utterly impossible that we should separate these two, piety, and our own good. We cannot so much as desire to be good, but we shall feel a satisfaction in it. For the very name of good carries a respect in it, to something in us to which it is agreeable and convenient. We do not mean, when we bid you love God for himself, that you should not therein love yourself, and seek your own contentment; for you cannot choose but be pleased in the love of God and virtue. But this I may affirm with safety; that there may be sometimes too much of self-love in our vehement desires after the extraordinary pleasures and joys of piety: and that if we could be content, after we used due diligence, with our dryness and barrenness of spirit, with our dulness and want of vigour, nay, with our frailties and faults too, merely out of submission to God, and because he thinks not fit to give us the pleasure of being wholly without them; it would be highly acceptable to him, and no less advantageous to us. If in all things, I mean, we could rest satisfied that God's will is done, though ours be denied; if we could forbear to prosecute our own will even in those matters, and desire him to give us as much life, and spirit, and cheerfulness and joy as he pleases; we should be so far from offending him, that he would take it for a very grateful piece of service to him.

This is not to teach any remissness in your desires and en-

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deavours, but it supposes you do your best, and only advises you, that, if notwithstanding you cannot be as you would, you do not let your spirit fall into any impatience or fretfulness. For this is to prefer God's pleasure above your own. It is a subjection of your will to his in those points wherein you are most desirous to have it gratified. It is an unusual instance of resignation to him; which declares there is nothing so dear to you but you are willing to quit it, so you may but do well, and be accepted with him.

And here remember these two things: first, that our solid comfort doth not depend upon doing every thing so readily, easily, and delightfully as we would, but in accomplishing God's will, however it be done. And, secondly, that humility, patience, and submission to God in the midst of our infirmities, may be more acceptable to him than that complacence and joy which we feel to arise merely from the sense that we have of our strength and abilities. To be pleased in our successes is not so pleasing to God as to be patient in our contests. Nay, to rejoice and triumph in our victories is nothing so good as to be constant and resolved, notwithstanding that we are a little overcome. In those spiritual consolations which we thirst after, we do not always receive so much profit as we do pleasure; but in the want of them, if our wills be thereby more perfectly subdued to his, we receive both a very great benefit, and, in the issue, no small pleasure.

You have seen, perhaps, or you may imagine the smoke of a potter's furnace, how thick and black it is, as if it would make a picture of hell itself. Who would think that the vessels of clay, which are baked there, would not be burnt to ashes by the fury of the fire; or that, at least, they would come out as black as soot by the foulness of the smoke? And yet, when the fire is put out, and the vessels unfurnaced, you see there is no such thing; but that which was soft and yielding, is become hard and strong; and its complexion likewise is so much mended, that a prince need not disdain the use of some of these cups. Just thus it is with a distressed soul, when it is covered with a cloud, and wrapt in darkness, and burns thereby in a great and sore displeasure against itself. It is apt to

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think that this, sure, is the gate of hell, that it is forsaken of God, and shall either perish in this condition, or not escape out of it without much loss. But after a while, when the work of God is done, and the vapours are vanished and disappear, it finds itself to be grown much in firmness, purity, and splendour; and that it is made a vessel of honour, fit for the Master's use. There is no loss of any thing but of its self-will. Nothing is consumed but its softness and delicacy, which made it loath to be touched.

The like may be said of many little passions and disorderly desires to which our frail natures are subject. If we can free ourselves from one inordinate passion, which is a too vehement desire to be quite rid of them, it might bring us little less peace than if we were; and our profiting would no less appear in continuing still to do our duty, of which we complain that they are so great an hinderance. However, there is no reason for such conclusions as those, which good minds have been apt to make in a gloomy day; that if God loved them, he would not treat them after that manner. There is rather great reason, considering what hath been said, to be not only patient, but thankful to him in such a condition. For it is not inconsistent with his care and infinite kindness to let us be obnoxious to those changes, and those weaknesses too, which I have mentioned; but you see plainly it must be so; and therefore it is best to be well pleased with these methods of our heavenly Father, at least contented that it should be so.

And let me add this for a conclusion of this discourse, that God may suffer some persons to be thus overcast with darkness, and he may withhold his gracious influences from them, for the sins of their former life before they were converted, which deserved he should never have afforded his grace unto them at all. What are we, should such men say, that we should expect to live always under the light of his countenance? Alas! one age of darkness is too good for us; and we have reason to thank him, if we be not eternally banished from his sight. Why should such poor things as we think to receive every day some extraordinary tokens of his Divine favour, when one good look from him is enough to oblige us as

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long as we live? How much more reason have we to praise him that all our days are not gloomy, that our sun is not always eclipsed, or rather that our life is but one long night, than to complain that a cloud sometimes passes over us, or a mist gathers about us! It is but fit that we should be hereby taught what it is to sin against God; and it is well for us that we were not sent to learn it in outer darkness. We are not ill dealt withal, if we can learn at so cheap a rate the value of pardoning mercy; but shall have cause in heaven to praise God that we paid no dearer for it. Is this all the punishment that is due for our many faults? Doth he not use us very kindly if we be not quite cast out of his presence? O what a joy will it be to us to find that we are in his favour in the other world! And we may be content, if he please, to stay for our joy till that time, when we shall certainly know whether we have reason to rejoice or no.

But I shall say no more of this to you, who have spent your time so innocently and virtuously, that there is reason you should reap the fruit of it now, in perpetual joy and satisfaction of heart, from the consideration of God's goodness to you. And I had wholly omitted this last advice, did not I know the weakness of human nature to be so great, that the best disposed souls may sometimes feel such alterations in them as may make it very necessary. In which case if ever you should find yourself, doubt not to approach to God, and say to him, with all humility of spirit, some such words as these:

A PRAYER.

I acknowledge, O great God, the Lord of heaven and earth, that I am not worthy of the least glimpse of thy divine favour. It is sufficient that I live and behold the light of the sun, and am not banished into outer darkness. And it is more than enough for so wretched a thing as I am, that thou art pleased, at any time of my life, to bestow upon me the smallest testimony of thy love. But that I live in hope to pass through all these clouds, and to behold my blessed Saviour in inconceivable splendour, and rejoice with him for ever, O what a grace is it! How infinitely am I indebted to thee for such riches of mercy! It ought to make me contented with any condition here; and exceeding thankful to thee that it is no worse. Deal with me, O merciful God, even as thou pleasest, so

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that I may but have this humble hope preserved in my heart, of seeing and loving my Lord, not as now, darkly and dully, but in the clearest light, and with the most ardent love, in immortal glory.

I submit to thy infinite wisdom under all that heaviness and listlessness of spirit wherewith I am oppressed; from which I know thy infinite power, if thou didst judge it most convenient, is able to deliver me. Thou art not unwilling neither, I know, to gratify the desires of pious hearts, who sincerely long after a state of more perfect love to thee, and would gladly, with more active and unwearied spirits, serve thee and all mankind. But since thou art pleased to leave us to contend with many and great infirmities of our mortal nature, thy will be done. I deserved none of that power and strength from above which I have received: O that I could say that I have always employed it, or been so thankful for it as I ought! By thy grace I am what I am: and by its assistance I hope to persevere in my duty, and in thy love, though thou deniest me all the satisfaction which I am inclined to desire. I am content to serve thee on any terms; yea, desirous to have my will subdued in every thing perfectly unto thine.

O that I may but feel my soul growing more humble, more submissive, more patient, more entirely resigned to thy pleasure; and I shall think myself a great gainer by all the loads and pressures under which I groan. O that they may depress me more in my own thoughts; and make me more admire thy indulgent kindness which exercises no greater severity upon me; and raise in me an higher esteem of those favours which thou art pleased at any time to communicate to me; and make me place my satisfaction in a constant and resolute obedience to thee, (whatsoever discouragements I meet withal,) and in the expectation of an happy translation from this earthly state to an heavenly, which thou hast promised as the reward of faithful obedience.

Into thy hands, O Lord, I now commend my spirit, as I must do when I leave this world. I trust myself with thee, beseeching thee to conduct me safe through all the various changes of this life, both bodily and spiritual, unto thy eternal rest. And for that end bestow upon me such an attentive and sincerely discerning spirit, that I may never be cheated by the laziness of fleshly nature, nor call that my infirmity which is my carelessness and negligence. Preserve me from all affected ignorance, from idleness, from rashness, from self-

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flattery and presumption; as well as from all causeless jealousies of myself, and too much sadness and dejection of spirit. Help me to overgrow daily the unsteadiness of my mind and thoughts, and that backwardness which is in my will and affections, together with all other imperfections and weaknesses of this state. But as for all the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, or the pride of life, O my God, I hope I shall be a perfect stranger to them, and far removed from them.

Help me in all conditions steadfastly to love the good which thou hast commanded, and the good which thou hast promised; and enable me as patiently to bear the evil which thou inflictest, and as vehemently to hate the evil which thou forbiddest, and to be much afraid of the evil which thou threatenest, and to be well pleased with every thing that thou sendest. If thou makest me rich, keep me from being wanton, or proud, or in love with this world, or loath to leave it: help me discreetly to taste of these good things, but to live upon those which are heavenly. And if thou art pleased to reduce me into want, keep me from all repining thoughts, from distrust of thee, and from too great carefulness and solicitude of mind: and help me then to remember that I have still the same most loving Father who fed me in the days of my fulness and prosperity. While I have my health, good Lord, make me serviceable; that if I be sick, I may not be disconsolate, nor uneasy to myself and others. In all my employments dispose me to be cheerful, in all my enjoyments thankful, and on all occasions very watchful, that I fall not into temptation: and be thou my guide, my helper, my defender, my comforter, and indulgent Father also, that if I do fall, I may not utterly be cast down, but live in hope to recover more strength, and to glorify thee by bringing forth much and better fruit, through Christ Jesus our blessed Saviour. By whom I believe in thee, who hast *raised him from the dead, and given him glory, that our faith and hope might be in thee our God*[z]. Amen.

Thus, my friend, I have finished this little *labour of love*, (to speak in the language of St. Paul[a],) which I wish may prove so serviceable to you, that it may do more than produce that *patience of hope* in you which he mentions in the same place. I would have you to be filled with the joy of hope, or, as he speaks in another epistle, *with all joy and peace in be-*

[z] 1 Pet. i. 21. [a] 1 Thess. i. 3.

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lieving[b]. It becomes one of your understanding and goodness; nor is there any greater effect of true wisdom (as Seneca hath observed) than the equality and evenness of our joy. Nothing, sure, can hinder it in you, but the inequality perhaps at some times of your bodily temper, which is not to be avoided. But in that case I have instructed you what to do; and I am sure you will not fail to follow my directions therein, and in all the rest, whatsoever pains it cost you. For I need not send you to Musonius to learn this great truth, (of which you are as sensible as it is encouraging,) that "if a man do any good thing with labour, the labour passes soon away, but the good remains: and if he do any evil with pleasure, the pleasure presently flies away, but the evil remains[c]." So great is the difference between doing well and doing ill, that you can never, I know, be tempted from the one unto the other. It is too late now to put a cheat upon you. The pleasures of sin cannot deceive one whose senses are so well exercised to discern between good and evil. You may be abused, it is possible, with fears and jealousies of yourself; and be cast down when you have no list to do any thing that is good, or when you mistake, or have committed a little fault: but as I said in the beginning, so I conclude, be sure you hold fast an unmovable belief of the goodness of God to you; which will defend you from the danger of those assaults, and prevent all the mischief which otherwise they might do you.

He doth not expect children without all faults, and, you may be sure, cannot be unwilling to pardon them, when he knows that is the way to encourage them to grow better. There is no reason to suspect his sincerity when he tells us that he desires not the death of a sinner; or to imagine that he secretly undermines us while he openly professes love and friendship to us; or to fear that he intends to make us the trophies of his mere power and greatness; or to draw us after him as his captives in any other chariot than that of his omnipotent goodness, in which he rides all the world over. Believe this, and it will never let you despond in the worst condition; nor suffer you to be jealous of any of his commands, or fancy that he will

[b] Rom. xv. 13. [c] [Apud Aul. Gell. Noctt. Att. lib. xvi. cap. 1.]

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lay impossible tasks upon you. And you will have as little cause to be suspicious of his providence, or to take too heavily any thing that he doth: but will still believe, notwithstanding any objections or contrary appearances, that all things shall work together for your good. And whatsoever there is that might dishearten you, this will make you persist in a resolute persuasion that God is willing and desirous to receive your petitions, and will grant a gracious answer. He cannot envy his blessings to any, nor loves he to suppress his kindness within himself; for envy proceeds from weakness and from want, which incline a person to seek how he may engross every thing, and appropriate it to his own particular being. But he who in his own nature is so perfect that he can want nothing, is inclined, no doubt, to let others participate with him in his happiness, since he will still remain as full as he was.

You think it is impossible (as Proclus[d] well says) that darkness should approach the sun, who is the parent of light; but it is more impossible that any envy should touch God, whose nature is so excellent that he hath given to all what they have. What is there left for him to envy, who hath already all that can be? For what want can there be in infinite fulness? what weakness and infirmity in the omnipotent Deity? Who is there that can share and go halves with the Fountain of all good? Let us not therefore look upon God as if we thought him afraid that we should be too good, or enjoy too much good; or as if he were unwilling we should be exceeding happy. For he is such a good, that he hath filled and replenished all things; and doth good, and bestows benefits continually upon them all. And why should you think yourself excluded out of the vast compass of his love; or imagine, after he hath done so much for you, that his bounty is exhausted? Do you not feel what kindness God hath implanted in our hearts towards each other? how free, how diligent, how unwearied a friend is in serving a person whom he loves entirely? And what is there better natured than that religion which Christ hath taught us, the top of which is *love* and *charity;* and that is both a bountiful, and a meek, and a patient virtue? For it *suffers long and is kind,*

[d] Φωτὸς γεννητικός. [p. 15.]

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so St. Paul begins its character; *it bears all things, and endures all things*, so he ends it[e]. And is it possible, do you think, that God should give us that which is not in himself? or that he should command us to accomplish our souls with that perfection which is not eminent in his own most excellent nature? We are sure that our loving-kindness is but a weak imitation of his: and therefore may conclude that he will have patience with us, and not be easily provoked, but bear with our infirmities, and be exceeding kind in bestowing his blessings and pardoning our offences, and delight in doing both; because there is nothing he so much delights to see in us as this image of his loving-kindness. So the greatest men in the church of Christ have resolved.

"Some empty their bags, (saith Gregory Nazianzen[f],) others macerate their flesh; and there are those who quite abandon the world, and retire out of it; and some who have consecrated their dearest pledges to God. But thou needest do none of these; there is one thing thou mayest bring and offer to him instead of all, and that is, *loving-kindness*, (forgiving of injuries, and doing benefits), in which God rejoices more than in all the rest put together. A proper gift; an unspotted gift; a gift that provokes the divine bounty to be still more liberal in his favours to us."

For it is impossible that he should be outdone by us, or that we should equal him in tenderness and compassion: of which he hath given us such a surprising and glorious instance in the Son of his love, Christ Jesus; that we should be very unjust as well as ungrateful and unkind, if we should not expect more from him than we would do from the best friend in the world. We see in our Lord what the divine love will incline him to do: we are satisfied beyond all reasonable cause of distrust how propitious and gracious he is. So that you ought to be confident, whatsoever defects you find in yourself, that *he who hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Christ Jesus*[g]. It is but handsome and becoming that you should have this opinion of him. Judge by yourself and your own

[e] [1 Cor. xiii. 4, 7.]

[f] Orat. 7. [lege 12. al. in ed. Ben. 6. § 4. tom. i. p. 182 C.]

[g] [Phil. i. 6.]

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good inclinations, whether you ought not to have such high thoughts of infinite love. You owe to him all the good you have: and there is more reason, as I told you, that he should perfect his own work, than there was that he should begin it. And therefore let your eyes be ever towards the Lord. Commit yourself to him, in assured hope of his continued love to you. Beseech him to *fulfil in you all the good pleasure of his goodness*[h]; and that, according to the trust you have reposed in him, he would *keep you from falling*, and *present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy*[i].

I cannot tell you how oft I have said AMEN to this; nor how much I am inclined to continue this discourse further than I have designed: "For wisdom itself (as the same Gregory Nazianzen hath observed[k]), which gives measures to all things else, sets none to friendship; which ought to know no bounds, nor be confined within any limits." But I shall contain myself within the compass which I prescribed myself at first; and add no more, unless it be that prayer of R. Eliezar[l], with which he is said to have concluded daily all his other prayers:

"LET IT BE THY GOOD PLEASURE, O LORD, THAT LOVE AND BROTHERLY KINDNESS MAY DWELL IN OUR LOT."

For why should I prolong this letter, in making any needless declarations how much I am, where or howsoever our lot falls,

Yours in love unfeigned,

S. P.

[h] [2 Thess. i. 11.] [i] [Jude 24.]

[k] Orat. 12. [ed. Ben. orat. 6. § 6. tom. i. p. 182 B.]

[l] [Quoted by Lightfoot, Horæ Hebr. on Matt. vi. 9; Works, vol. xi. p. 143.]

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A TREATISE

OF REPENTANCE AND OF FASTING,

ESPECIALLY OF

THE LENT FAST.

IN THREE PARTS.

Pœnitentia est male perpetrata plangere, et plangenda minime perpetrare.

[S. Greg. hom. 34. in Evang. tom. i. col. 1609 C.]

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IMPRIMATUR

Jo. Battely, R^mo P. D^no Wilhelm. Archiep. Cantuar.
a Sacris Domesticis.

Ex Ædib. Lamb.
Oct. 31, 1685.

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THE PREFACE TO THE READER.

THE Author of this little treatise designed it as a manual, not of controversy, but regular piety, and for common use. He did not, therefore, think fit to add any thing by way of disputation concerning those doctrines and practices in the Roman church which respect fasting and other bodily austerities.

It had been very easy for him to have written a more learned book; but, all things considered, he could not (it may be) have published at this time any thing more seasonable and generally useful.

We abound with books upon other practical subjects; though, by reason of the several tempers and capacities of readers, which in the same matter require variety of form, we cannot complain of a superfluity.

But upon this argument we meet not with great plenty of distinct treatises, unless we put such into the number as the writers have transcribed, some from fancy, others from severity of nature; for epicures are not more humorous in their rules of luxury than monastics are in their rules of abstinence.

It is happy therefore for the people that they have gained this tract concerning Fasting; in which the directions and persuasives to a mortified life are not embased either with capricious affectation or superstitious rigour. We have need of such directions, and of a strict and temperate practice suitable to them.

I intend not, by saying this, to accuse all the Christians of the church of England as libertines, but to quicken those who live in a remissness which is not answerable to her constitution. I know

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many in our communion who lead lives exceeding regular, and who exercise themselves in that which is truly fasting. One day, at least, in every week they either abstain till night, or use a small quantity of some ordinary thing, which, in this northern air, may keep the body from being unserviceable to the mind. Whereas often amongst others, their fasts, if they continue all day, are concluded with a luxurious supper, or (which is the common use) are but the using of another kind of diet, and then they may eat a plentiful dinner: though this change of diet (especially among the rich) is no more fasting than change of apparel is going naked. An evening collation also is even then allowed, and to drink at all times of the day (according to their casuists) doth not dissolve a fast. Filliutius, in particular, saith, that drinking water, or wine, or beer, whether before or after dinner, whether for nourishment or not, does not break a man's fast[a].

There is the like mistake in a thing near akin to this, which it may not be amiss, in this place, to correct, because some good people (I see) are apt to fall into it. There is a complaint amongst us of want of cells and cloisters, in which the exercises of mortification might be (as they think) more advantageously performed. But as we do not enviously lessen the true privileges of other places, or scornfully forbear to wish among ourselves any good which is in others, so we really believe it is much better to be without such religious houses, than to have them so constituted and governed as they generally are in other countries, and as they sometime were amongst ourselves, where they have too much served either to feed sloth or to heat melancholy, by mystical arts of musing into distraction; in which things human nature, as it is in imperfect man, needs no assistances.

Blessed be God, we have at this day, in this judicious and pious church, very great conveniences for the promoting of a holy and mortified, and, if need be, a very retired life. The members of it may be Recluses in both senses of the word, which signifies, truly, persons at liberty, and, abusively, persons shut up. For there is not (that I know of) any city, or scarce a great town, where there are not religious guides of good ability, public prayers morning and evening, frequent sacraments, pious furniture for the closet, together with good numbers of persons devoutly disposed; and especially in and by London these happy conveniences are abundantly afforded,

[a] [Quæst. Moral.] Tract. xxvii. pars 11. c. 2. q. 10. [tom. ii. p. 223.]

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and (I thank God) by very many heartily embraced. Now, if any are inclined to live more privately, and (the state of the world and the affairs of their families well allowing it) to dedicate a great part of their time to heavenly contemplation, and to the more immediate worship of God; they may serve the holy purposes of devotion, by retired lodgings in such cities, and nigh such churches, generally much better (in my opinion) than by taking a habit, and making a vow, and committing themselves, as it were, to a religious prison.

They may be as devout and as abstemious as they please. They may choose their conversation, which is not such if it be not agreeable. They may go into the world as often as they see they can be useful to it; and they may shut it out when they judge its company to be inconvenient. And as soon as their love of solitude is known, and the loose and impertinent find their discourse not relished, and their visits not returned, they will not uncivilly obtrude upon them. All this the pious amongst us may do upon choice; which is the true salt of every sacrifice we offer to God. They may do it without confinement to one air and one place; to a society, in which generally there is a faction which makes it uneasy to persons of quiet tempers; to the temptation of coveting forbidden liberty; to offices which in their nature are superstitious, and, by their length and perpetual repetition, tedious and burdensome.

They may retire without being loosed from the bonds of their duty to their natural parents, which that great pretender to mortification, the abbé de La Trappe [b], will have to be cancelled by the new monastic alliance, and, as they call it, the moral death and burial of

[b] Des Devoirs de la Vie Monastique, tom. ii. ch. 16. Quest. 12, 13, &c. p. 55, &c. ed. 2. p. 57.—"Si les enfans en se retirant——ont perdu les parens qu' ils y avoient selon la chair; la religion leur en a rendu d'autres selon l'Esprit," &c. [Armand Jean Le Bouthillier de Rancé, the celebrated reformer of the order of La Trappe, published in 1683, but a short time before the present work was written, his Treatise De la Sainteté et des Devoirs de la Vie Monastique, which provoked much active controversy on the subject of the monastic life in general, and especially on that of the unsparing interdiction of every literary pursuit by that ascetic writer. One of his principal opponents was the eminent Benedictine Mabillon. The life of De Rancé, compiled from various French authorities, was published in English by the late Charles Butler, Lond. 1814. Another biography, more copious and elegant in style, was among the latest publications of M. De Chateaubriand; to which peculiar interest is attached by the circumstance (as currently reported in French literary circles) that its composition was specially enjoined upon him by his spiritual directors, in partial expiation of the liberality of his earlier writings. There are also good compendious notices of the Abbé in the Biographie Universelle and Moreri's Dictionary.]

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the religious in a cloister. They may be orderly without confinement to such rules as are either absurd, unprofitable, or unfit for their temper, strength, or present circumstance. For example sake, they need not be stinted in the three hot months to just so many draughts without the especial license of the superior: they need not be obliged to have all their sallets dressed with cheese and oil: they need not be forbidden to sleep in any afternoon which comes not betwixt the ides of May and September; or be enjoined, as soon as they are risen from their tables, to betake themselves to their prayers: which rules, with many others, where discretion has had a less share in the forming of them than imagination, we find in a body of them collected by Menardus [c]. And yet you are not to esteem of such rules as human inventions, but as laws written by the very finger of God [d], and received (as they say the rule of St. Pachomius was) by the ministry of an angel. And you are to believe the superior is the vicar of Christ [e].

Doubtless a mixed life is the most profitable for the state of the world; and St. Austin himself esteemed it to be so: and Monsieur Godeau [f], though a bishop of the Roman church, agrees with him in that opinion: so that the words of David, *Thou hast broken my bonds in sunder*, which (they say) determined the thoughts of the Count de Bouchage [g] to a monastic retreat, should (one would think), both by the sound and by the moral sense of them, have rather released him from the narrow limits of his pensive inclination.

But I forgot that I am not to make this entrance too large; and I ought not any longer to detain the reader from the book itself. I will therefore say no more, but that I wish this pious treatise may come into many hands before that solemn time of mortification which is approaching; and that it may be a means, by promoting true Christian sobriety, to counterbalance that sensuality amongst us, which needs such a real and exemplary reprehension.

[c] Menard. Conc. Reg. [Concordia regularum, auctore S. Benedicto Aniane Abbate, cura Fr. Hugonis Menardi, mon. Ben.] p. 713, 715, 815, &c. [4to. Par. 1638.]

[d] Des Devoirs, &c. tom. i. ch. 2. Q. 3. p. 6.—"Comme les loix écrites du doigt de Dieu."

[e] Ib. p. 147.

[f] La vie de S. A. p. 560, 561. [p. 592. ed. 2. 4to. Par. 1657.]

[g] L'Hist. du Card. de Joyeuse, p. 19. [ch. iv. p. 38 of the English translation 'by R. R. Catholique priest,' 8vo. Douay, 1623.]

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PART I.

CHAP. I.

Of repentance in general.

THE nature of repentance may be understood by the use of the word *repent*, the very first time we meet with it in the Book of God; where it is said, *It repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at the heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man and beast, &c.; for it repenteth me that I have made them*[a].

I find no words wherein the affections of penitent minds are better and more fully expressed than these; in which Moses, speaking concerning the divine mind and will in the language of men, hath given us a lively description of the temper of our own hearts, if we truly repent that we have offended God.

For, first, when a man repents of any thing, that thing displeases him very much. Which is the very foundation of all that is here said by Moses concerning God's repenting that he had made mankind; with whom he was highly displeased for their most wicked behaviour towards their Almighty Creator and bountiful Benefactor.

Then follows, in the next place, sadness, grief, and sorrow of mind; which as naturally flows from the displeasure that anything gives us as joy doth from complacency and good liking. And proportionable to the dislike we have of any thing will be our sadness that we meddled with it; so that if we greatly dislike any action we have done, it will *grieve us* (as the phrase is in Moses) *at the very heart.*

Upon which follows a ceasing to do that action, which gives us such displeasure that it creates us inexpressible grief and sorrow.

[a] Gen. vi. 6, 7.

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Nor is this all; but, condemning in himself what he hath done, such a penitent wishes, and, as far as he hath power, endeavours to have it undone; and therefore, we may be sure, would not upon any account do it if it were to be done again.

In testimony whereof, because the thing cannot be undone, he takes care and uses caution for the time to come that it be done no more; and thereby labours to destroy the whole *body of sin*[a] (as God destroyed man from the face of the earth), because he heartily repents that ever he committed it, and would gladly obliterate, if it were possible, even the memory of it.

We ought not to think that we have true *repentance towards God*, as St. Paul calls it[b], unless we feel our hearts thus affected.

For it is confessed by every one that hath any sense of God, that all things which we do are not alike pleasing unto him, but with some things he is highly offended; and that if we be not of his mind, but so cross as to please ourselves in those things which are displeasing unto him, we run ourselves thereby into a state of opposition and enmity to his Majesty.

Upon which when we reflect, we cannot be well satisfied with ourselves, but much displeased at what we have done; because we have been so bold as to contradict God, and by that means are become guilty before him, and obnoxious to such punishments as he shall think fit to inflict upon us.

And if we believe the holy Scriptures, the punishments due to this contempt of God are so frightful, that no guilty man can think of them without some horror; and not only be touched with a sense of his folly and of his danger, but be very much troubled and afflicted (whether he respect God or himself) that he hath, as the Scripture speaks, walked contrary to him, and thereby made himself liable to his heavy displeasure.

And therefore, condemning what he hath done (which he cannot look upon without shame and confusion of face, as well as with grief and sorrow), he resolves to do so no more, but to betake himself hereafter unto a new life, conformable to God's holy will and pleasure in all things. In the former of which that which we call repentance begins; and in the latter it ends. An unfeigned sorrow and grief that we have offended God is

[a] [Rom. vi. 6.] [b] Acts xx. 21.

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the beginning of it; and a serious purpose of amendment of life completes it.

All this is agreed by those that write upon this subject. And therefore my business is only to show that the first part of repentance doth not consist merely in that inward compunction, and grief, and shame, and heaviness of heart, which are the necessary effects of a true sense of what a sinner hath done, and of what he deserves to suffer; but likewise in such outward expressions of this inward sense as are suitable to the dismal condition into which he hath thrown himself, and naturally flows from a heart deeply affected with its guilt, and duly afflicted and grieved for it.

CHAP. II.

Of sorrow for sin in particular.

THAT we ought to be inwardly troubled in our mind, and exceedingly grieved, afflicted, and pained at the very heart, to think we have offended so good and gracious a Father as hath called us into the state of salvation by Christ Jesus, and thereby lost his grace and favour; is a thing, as I have said already, confessed, without any the least dispute about it. And it is as much acknowledged, I hope, that it ought not to end till it hath wrought in us a sincere resolution to do so no more. It is senseless to think of recovering his favour, unless we be thus piously disposed.

But I shall prove as plainly, that it becomes true penitents to make such outward expressions of those inward affections as may not only show to all the world that they are heartily sorry and ashamed of their folly, their falseness, their ingratitude, and all the disorders they have committed, to the dishonour of God, and the disturbance of the peace and good estate of the world, but also satisfy themselves that their affliction is more than a transient passion, and be a security likewise to them from relapsing into that wickedness which, if they be sincere penitents, they resolve to forsake.

The soul and the body are so near neighbours, or rather friends, that one of them cannot be concerned in any thing but the other must bear its part therein also; and therefore, as

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they accompany one another in all other actions, so it is fit and just and necessary that they should do in repentance. They have done evil together; and therefore it is but reasonable that they join in their humiliations and sorrow for it, and in their abhorrence of it. When the heart is heavy and sad, the body also should put on the habit of a mourner, who laments the greatest mischief that could befall him.

In treating of which, I shall

I. First show what these outward expressions of sorrow and grief are, and whence they arise; and then,

II. Briefly demonstrate that they have been the practice of Christian people; who ever thought the condition of a great sinner so doleful, that it called for the bitterest lamentations: and,

III. Lay before you, as briefly, the uses for which they serve, and the profit we may receive by them.

IV. And, lastly, give some cautions to prevent the abuse of them, that we may not receive damage by those things which are intended for our advantage.

CHAP. III.

Concerning outward acts of sorrow.

WHAT the outward acts of sorrow are which the sense of their guilt extorts from true penitents, we may learn from the prophet Joel, if we read seriously the 12th and 13th verses of the second chapter; where God calls upon them to *turn unto him with all their heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning*, &c. The main thing here required was to turn from their evil ways sincerely, and without any reserve; but an observant reader cannot but take notice that this was also to be performed with *fasting*, and with *weeping*, and with *mourning*. Their *hearts* were to be *rent* in the first place, *and not their garments* (as it there follows), for otherways there was no hope they would *turn unto the Lord:* but their garments were to be rent also (it being a part of *mourning*), as the effect and the declaration of the renting of the heart,

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and as a token they meant not to continue any longer in their sins, but to part with them, and be entirely separated from them.

But to prevent all fancies which may possibly start up in any man's mind, that the duty I am about to recommend to them is proper only to the Old Testament spirit and times, (as some have been taught to speak,) I shall desire the reader only to study two other verses in the Epistle of St. James; which comprehend, I think, all that belongs to this matter. They are ver. 9, 10 of the 4th chapter, *Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.*

He had exhorted them in the foregoing words, verse 8, to *draw nigh to God*, in a deep sense that they were great sinners, to acknowledge their guilt, to deprecate his displeasure, and to resolve to be better men; both by *cleansing their hands* and by *purifying their hearts:* and that with all sincerity and singleness of spirit, being no longer *double-minded*, (sometimes resolving to do well, and then revolting to their beloved sins again,) but thoroughly and entirely returning to him in new obedience. And then, just as the prophet Joel required the Israelites to *turn unto the Lord with all their heart; and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning;* so the apostle requires the Christians to whom he writes to *draw nigh to God* after the same manner; with upright hearts, and with no less but rather greater tokens of their inward trouble that they had offended him. For he bids them not only *be afflicted*, and *mourn*, and *weep*, but to refrain from all mirth and joy, and to be in heaviness: without which humiliations it was not fit for great sinners to present themselves before an offended Majesty, or to hope for mercy from him.

Which words, if we examine by the phrases of the Old Testament, which are our best guides for the interpreting of the New, we shall find there is not one of them but signifies some outward expression of great grief and sorrow, which was used by devout people in token of hearty repentance.

When they kept their great fast enjoined by the law on the day of expiation, it was called a *day of afflicting their*

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souls[c], which explains the first word in St. James, and shows it to be the very same with that in Joel, *turn unto him with fasting.*

And if we search further, wherein this *afflicting* themselves consisted, we shall find an explication of the rest that follow. For it did not consist barely in abstinence from food, but in putting on also the habit of mourners, (*sackcloth and ashes,*) and in the action of *renting the garments,* in bewailing and lamenting their condition, which are the next phrases in St. James, *mourn* and *weep.*

And if we still proceed further in our inquiry, we shall find that on such days of *afflicting* themselves they also abstained from all sorts of pleasure; they would not so much as wash their faces, much less anoint their heads; no, nor look up, but hanged down their heads in confusion of face. Music and songs were perfect strangers to them; nor would they take any rest, but they punished their bodies with watchings, and lying on the bare ground: to testify their sorrow and grief for what evil they had done, or for the evils they felt or feared. And accordingly here it follows in the apostle, in perfect conformity to those customs, *Let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy into heaviness,* or into *hanging down of the head* with shame and grief.

And if we go on to search into the ground of all this, it will further illustrate the thing in hand. For it is visible, that upon occasion of any sorrowful accidents, they were wont in those eastern countries to express their sense of it by putting on sackcloth, lying on the ground, strewing ashes on their heads, and such like things: which is notorious, more especially, in case of the loss of their friends and near relations. Thus Jacob bewailed the supposed death of his son Joseph[d]. And thus Rizpah the concubine of Saul lamented her children, whom the Gibeontes hanged on a gibbet[e]. And thus Job, when he heard of the calamity befallen his family, *rent his mantle, shaved his head, fell down upon the ground*[f], and remained in silence, without speaking a word for seven days. And thus his friends also, hearing of all this evil, and beholding, when they came to

[c] Lev. xvi. 29, 31; Isa. lviii. 5.
[d] Gen. xxxvii. 34, 35.
[e] 2 Sam. xxi. 10.
[f] Job i. 20.

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visit him, in what a lamentable condition he lay himself, *lift up their voice and wept, and rent every man his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads, and sat down with him upon the ground in silence*[g]. Nor are there wanting numerous examples (which I shall omit) of the very same customs among other nations, as well as among the Jews and these Arabians.

No wonder then if pious men, who were touched with a sense of their sin and of the divine displeasure, used the very same signs and testimony of their grief, which were customary in other cases of far less consequence. For what greater mischief can befall us than the loss of God's favour? or rather, what calamity is equal or nearly approaching to it? And therefore there is more reason to bewail our offences against him (which put us out of his favour) most heavily, and with the most doleful tokens of our sorrow for them, than there is to bewail the loss of the dearest friend we have in this world, or the greatest misfortune, as we term it, that can possibly befall us.

And accordingly we read, that when holy Job humbled himself before God for his too peremptory vindication of his own innocence, he doth it in the same manner that he had bewailed his afflictions, saying, *I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes*[h]. And the prophets often call upon the Israelites to put on sackcloth, and to bewail themselves in ashes, when they would have them mourn for their sins, and (as it is in 1 Sam. vii. 2.) *lament after the Lord:* that is, seek the recovery of his favour by an hearty repentance.

For they did not think it fit for grievous offenders to look up to him whose authority they had affronted, without tears in their eyes, and a sad and sorrowful countenance; in the most mournful posture and habit, and the bitterest expressions of their grief and inward anguish: as knowing that they deserved to be unprofitably bewailing their sins in a more dismal place, where there is nothing *but weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.*

Why! some will say; doth God delight to hear our shrieks and groans? or would you have us be our own tormentors? Is

[g] Job ii. 12, 13. [h] xlii. 6.

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it reasonable a man should be cruel to his own flesh, and make it his business to put himself to pain? There is nothing from which human nature more abhors than sorrow and grief; and nothing is more friendly to it than pleasure and joy.

Ἅπαν τὸ λυπoῦν ἐστιν ἀνθρώπῳ νόσος[i].

'Every thing that saddens and afflicts us is a real disease and sickness:' to which we cannot but be averse, and by all means study to avoid.

Unto which I answer, as Solon did to one who told him, when he wept for his son, that he troubled himself, but profited nothing by it, Δι' αὐτὸ γάρ τοι τοῦτο, ἔφη, κλαίω: 'that is the very reason,' said he, 'why I cannot but weep[k].' So when men say, that nature is hurt by sorrow, the reply may justly be, that is one of the things which should make you sorrowful: to see how you have spoiled the beauty and goodliness of human nature; how you have sullied it by your sins, and darkened the brightness and cheerfulness of it, by eclipsing the light of God's countenance, which we were made to enjoy and to rejoice therein; and causing this world to become nothing but a scene of misery, a place of mourning and lamentation, either for our sins or for our sufferings.

It is a sad sight indeed to behold a creature made for great happiness, to be now so altered that in all the creation there is not one so full of complaints as man: but it will be a sadder, if his first complaint be not of the cause of all this, which is our sins. These, if they be not sorrowfully bewailed, are the most grievous and lamentable of all things else, in the account of those who rightly weigh them.

But besides this, we must consider, that this is the way to make men leave their sins; and so be restored to true joy and gladness. If they can take pleasure in evil courses as well as in good, they will never be at the trouble of an exchange; nor scarce think of it, till they be mourning there where tears will never cease to flow, and drown them in eternal sorrows.

Nay, more than this, to think of our sins without due sorrow and grief for them is in truth to repeat them. So far are they

[i] [Ἀντιφάνης ἐξ Ἰατροῦ, apud Stob. Floril. tit. xcix. 31.]
[k] [Diog. Laert. lib. i. §. 63.]

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from leaving them who are not grieved for them, that whensoever they call them to mind without such grief, it is in effect again to commit them. Their minds are pleased with them; and there they do that over again which was done before in outward actions. Upon this score therefore we are to be afflicted for them; and if we be, mourning and tears and sad lamentations will not be wanting, proportionable to the affliction which they give our spirits. According to that saying of Philemon[1],

———— ἡ λυπὴ δ' ἔχει
ὥσπερ τὸ δένδρον τοῦτο καρπὸν, τὸ δάκρυον.

'Grief, like a tree, hath tears for its fruit:' which spring out of sorrow as a natural expression thereof; and are a means, as I shall show more hereafter, to remove the cause. And what greater cause, as I have said, is there for our grief and heaviness, and all their mournful attendants, than this; that we have offended him by our sins who is able to punish them in endless sorrows? When lesser things produce sometime a flood of tears, we cannot but conclude, without any other reason for it, that they are justly expected in a very great measure here.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Christian practice in this matter.

And thus the constant practice of the Christian church hath expounded these words of St. James; by requiring such humiliations, affliction, and doleful bemoaning of themselves, from those who had so grievously offended God, as to be thrown out of their communion before they would receive them again into it. Which is a thing so notorious, that by the word *repentance*, among the ancient writers of religion, nothing else is commonly meant but open confession of their sins, with sad lamentations of them, and of the woful condition into which they had brought them.

There are many remarkable things to this purpose in the records of the church, more than enough to fill a much bigger

[1] [In Sardio, apud Jull. Poll. lib. ix. cap. 6. §65. Auct. incert. apud Plutarch. Consol. ad Apollon. p. 105.]

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book than this; if I would give myself liberty to relate with what humble prostrations, with what tears and doleful lamentations, *conciliciati et concinerati* (as Tertullian's words are [m]), 'covered with hair-cloth, and buried, as it were, in ashes,' with fastings and watchings, with sighs and groans, and mournful voices, looking dismally lean, pale and meagre, by long grief and neglect of their bodies, penitents were wont to cast themselves down upon the earth; and not only supplicate God's mercy, but beg and beseech in the most miserable manner, the pardon and the prayers of their Christian brethren.

But my design is only to show that all this, which was the unquestionable practice of the early ages of the church, had its foundation in the very beginning of our religion, and was directed by the apostles themselves: who, when any sinner was so senseless that he was not at all afflicted for the crimes he had committed, so impudent that he was not ashamed of the foulest wickedness (and therefore was to be excommunicated and cut off from the body of Christ), required the whole church to bewail his sin and his misery in the most sad and mournful manner. And therefore we may be confident this was expected from the sinner himself, when by this means he was awakened out of his lethargy, to see into what a woful condition he had brought himself by his offences.

For this is the thing which St. Paul blames in the Corinthians' church [o], that when an eminent person among them had committed *such fornication as was not so much as named among the Gentiles*, they were so far from being concerned about it, that they were *puffed up* with a vain opinion of their dearness to God, because of their spiritual gifts wherein they abounded. Whereas they should *have rather mourned, that he who had done this deed might be taken away from among them* [n]. That is, they should have met together in the church to separate such a person from their society, with wailings and lamentations over him; in token of their own sorrow for and detestation of so foul a fact; and that they looked upon him as a lost man till he recovered himself by repentance, and mourned, as they had done, for his sins.

The Jews, it is well known, when any man was to be punished

[m] [De Pudicit. cap. 13. p. 564 C.] [n] 1 Cor. v. 1, 2.
[o] ['Corinthian church,' ed. 1.]

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with death for blasphemy, and such like crimes, *proclaimed a fast* (as we read in the story of Naboth [p]); that is, they mourned and wept, they put on sackcloth, and humbled themselves; they did all other things of this nature, which might testify their sorrow that God should be so dishonoured, and the offender should bring himself to such a miserable end. Which the church thought it reasonable to imitate, when they cut off any person from their body, (as a number of ecclesiastical writers inform us, and this passage in St. Paul instructed them;) they fasted, they wept, they put themselves into the habit of mourners, and stripped themselves of their ornaments; to declare their abhorrence of the sins which were thus punished, and to express their grief for the scandal they had given; which hereby they wiped off.

Nay, the apostles themselves (which is still more) did not refrain from these lamentations; but, when they in person executed this sentence against any sinner, humbled themselves and gave the most sensible tokens of their inward grief and sorrow. This we may learn from the same St. Paul in his next Epistle to the Corinthians.

Where, after he had mentioned several sins, which they had not reformed, he concludes in these words: *I fear lest when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness, and fornication, and lasciviousness which they have committed* [q]. To bewail these men, was to punish them with excommunication; which was accompanied with wailings and lamentations over them, as men in a sad and most dangerous condition; and very much *humbled*, that is, afflicted and grieved the apostles themselves when they considered it: who thought God himself expected it from them; for whose sake, and to preserve a due regard to his sacred Majesty, St. Paul foresaw he must, in all likelihood, be forced to appear in the habit of a mourner, when he came again among the Corinthians.

In short, just as men mourn for their friends who are dead corporally, so did they bewail those who were dead spiritually. Which they ought sure much more to have done themselves, if there had been any sense remaining in them, and they had

[p] 1 Kings xxi. [q] 2 Cor. xii. 20, 21.

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not been *dead in trespasses and sins.* And did bewail, no doubt, as soon as by this severity they were awakened out of their sleep, and *arose from the dead* (as St. Paul speaks[r]); that is, had any motion of spiritual life appeared again in them, and were brought to a feeling of their lamentable condition.

Which lamentations of themselves sometimes continued so long, even by the inclination of the penitents themselves, that they did not think fit, when they had highly offended God, to leave them off as long as they lived. The deacon's wife in Asia is a famous instance of it: who, having been seduced and corrupted in her body by Marcus, whom she followed a long time, but, at last, by the diligence of the brethren, converted, spent all her days in penance, bewailing and lamenting the corruption she had suffered by that magician: as Epiphanius relates out of Irenæus[s].

Many such observations might be heaped up, and more added out of the holy Scriptures; but this is sufficient, I think, to reform the error which is crept in among us, that outward humiliations and bodily afflicting ourselves signify nothing in the Christian religion; but inward grief and sorrow doth all. This is not apostolical doctrine; and the church of God hath always thought otherways. St. Paul himself teaches us, in another epistle, that though *godliness* (all the actions of Christian piety) be the chief thing, yet *bodily exercise* is not to be looked upon as altogether unprofitable: *Bodily exercise profiteth little; but godliness is profitable unto all things*[t], &c. So we now read in our printed Bibles, *profiteth little;* but I have reason to think the translation at first was, *profiteth a little;* because in the margent, referring it to time, it is translated thus, *or, for a little time*[u]. Which shows they thought there was some profit in bodily exercise, though but little in comparison with the profit of godliness itself. And so it is expressed in the Greek more clearly and fully, *bodily exercise is profitable* πρὸς ὀλίγον, 'a little way,' (as it may be rendered,) serves to some purpose, and is useful in its kind. And therefore the

[r] Eph. v. 14.

[s] Hæres. 34. n. 3. Τὸν ἅπαντα χρόνον ἐξομολογουμένη διετέλεσε, πενθοῦσα καὶ θρηνοῦσα ἐφ' ᾗ ἔπαθεν ὑπὸ τοῦ Μάγου διαφθορᾷ. [tom. i. p. 235 D.]

[t] 1 Tim. iv. 8.

[u] As S. Austin c ap. 33. de Moribus Eccl. Cath. [tom. i. col. 713 D.] and most of the ancients expound it.

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apostle doth not speak slightingly of it, (as men are apt to understand his words in our translation,) but rather commends it; though with diminution, in respect of something else, which was far better, and more to the purpose.

Now, by *bodily exercise*, I suppose, no man is so weak as to imagine the apostle meant such exercise as is necessary for the health, or the pleasure and recreation of the body, (there being no occasion to speak of such matters,) but rather intended such exercises as did afflict and impair the body, and may help *a little way* to conserve or restore the health of the soul. Such as fastings, watchings, lying on the ground, *eating the bread of affliction*, (as the Scripture calls it,) that is, coarse food, abstaining from conjugal pleasures; and in general, all ill-treatments of the body; which served to humble it, and bring down the pride and wantonness of it. Epiphanius thus reckons them up, when he speaks of the exercises that accompanied their prayers in the week before Easter[x].

CHAP. V.

The use of bodily exercises.

THAT these exercises are something profitable, is the next thing I propounded to be treated of in this discourse. I am sure they are very becoming a great offender, though they be the least that God expects from him: and therefore they ought not to be utterly decried and disgraced, while we teach there is something much beyond them, without which they will do us but little good.

1. For, first, they are natural expressions of the sense a man hath of his own vileness and baseness, and may very much conduce to promote it, and make him more apprehensive of it.

2. And they are as natural expressions of the sense he hath of his abuse of the good things which God allowed him to enjoy; and of his grief and sorrow, which that sad reflection works in him.

[x] Hæres. lxxv. Χαμευνίαι, ἀγνεῖαι, κακοπάθειαι, ξηροφαγίαι, εὐχαὶ, ἀγρυπνίαι τε καὶ νηστεῖαι, &c. [§ 3. tom. i. p. 907 C.]

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3. They declare also a sense of his unworthiness to enjoy those good things any longer: he acknowledging, by his fasting and abstinence, (for instance,) that his daily bread, yea, the least morsel of it, is too good for him; and by his throwing off all his ornaments, that he deserves to be stripped of all other blessings which God hath adorned him withal.

4. They are a just acknowledgment likewise of his offences, which have made him thus unworthy; and plainly declare also that he looks with detestation upon those evil courses which have made him not to look like himself.

5. Further, they are a sign of a man's intention and purpose to alter the whole course of his life, and to become quite another man.

6. Nay, more than this, they are a beginning of self-denial, and some small exercise of it, in things which fleshly nature very much desires: as we all know it doth good meat and drink, fine clothes, ease, and all manner of pleasures.

7. And further, they may help also to mortify the evil that is in any of those desires; and dispose a man to avoid those sins more carefully hereafter, which have procured him so much grief, affliction, and trouble. That is, they are not merely testifications of our grief for sins past, and our detestation of what we have done amiss, which is a first part of repentance; but, if they be rightly used, may prove a means to secure our resolution of amendment, (which they also naturally testify) and help to preserve us from revolting to those sins, of which we express so great detestation, and feel to be very afflictive: which is the other and best part of repentance.

8. They may serve also to dispose a man to seriousness in meditation and prayer, by taking his thoughts off from all worldly things, as little or nothing worth.

9. More particularly, they may serve to raise in our mind a due valuation of the happiness of the other world, when we despise all the enjoyments of this. Which was a doctrine St. Matthias was wont to press, (as Clemens Alexandrinus reports his words[y],) σαρκὶ μὲν μάχεσθαι καὶ παραχρῆσθαι, &c., 'to oppose the flesh, and to treat it ill;' not suffering it to have its desires; ψυχὴν δ' αὔξειν, 'but to nourish the soul by faith and

[y] L. iii. Strom. p. 436. [cap. 4. p. 523. ed. Potter.]

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by knowledge:' for by subtracting from the body, we make provision for the soul's increase in wisdom and goodness. Which end of abstinence we are taught in the collect for the first Sunday in Lent; wherein we pray, that "our flesh being subdued to the Spirit, we may ever obey his godly motions in righteousness and true holiness," &c.

10. And, to omit other things, I see no reason why I should not add, in the last place, that these severities are acts of a just revenge, which a sinner takes upon himself for his former exercises, by intemperance, luxury, impurity, pride, and vainglory.

They are but just expressions of a due indignation against his past follies; and a becoming chastisement, which he inflicts upon himself for his licentious way of living.

St. Paul himself mentions this *revenge* as the last effect of the Corinthians' sorrowing after a godly sort[z]: *For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you* (to satisfy the apostle), *yea, what clearing of yourselves* (of approving what he condemned), *yea, what indignation,* (against the offender,) *yea, what fear* (of the apostolical censures), *yea, what vehement desire* (to recover, I suppose, the apostle's good opinion), *yea, what zeal* (for the apostle's authority, which some slighted), *yea, what revenge* (in inflicting punishments suitable to the offence).

By which word *revenge* it is true (and I will not in the least prevaricate in this argument) the best interpreters, and I believe rightly, understand the punishment lately inflicted by the sentence of excommunication pronounced against the incestuous person, according to the apostle's order. Yet it is manifest, I think, that this revenge was taken by the church, because the man did not take it on himself. If he had been sadly afflicted, if he had humbled himself by fasting and weeping and mourning, by confessing his sin, by confusion of face, and all other signs of a true penitent; the church had not proceeded to such a degree of severity against him as to deliver him up to Satan. And such a revenge, whether enjoined by the church or inflicted by a man's self, the apostle makes the fruit of a pious sorrow.

[z] 2 Cor. vii. 11.

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That sharp grief wherewith the heart is wounded when it reflects upon its disobedience to a most gracious Father, those stings which a mind conscious of such foul ingratitude feels in itself, that shame, that self-displicency and loathing, which arises out of a serious sense of a man's offences, work in him such a detestation of his former course of life, that it will incline him, by afflicting and punishing himself after such a manner as I have described, to prevent the like again.

CHAP. VI.

The abuse of these exercises ought not to hinder the use: wherein a further account is given of them.

AND this course ought not to be laid aside because some have turned this just *revenge*, by inflicting punishments upon themselves, for such ends as I have named, into a proper *satisfaction* of the justice of God. Which is the fault of the church of Rome; who, by abusing many profitable things, have made others throw them quite away.

To fancy any such satisfaction as they speak of, (which is variously explained by them, and by some very injuriously unto our Lord Christ,) is to stretch the virtue of these things too far: but if we therefore shall wholly reject them, that will be to start aside as much the other way. The church of God, in the purest times, before the birth of those errors which are comprehended under the name of Popery, most earnestly recommended and enjoined such afflictions of the body, without any design of satisfying the divine justice for their sins; and yet with an intention to punish themselves for them: in hope that God would graciously spare them, and accept of their unfeigned repentance; of which these were the signs and tokens, and also the beginnings of a new life, and the means to bring it to greater perfection.

The very fast of Lent was anciently prolonged to that number of days of which it now consists, for the benefit of the public patients that were in the church: who by such humiliations as I have mentioned gave satisfaction to the church (which was another end of their afflicting themselves), and humbly begging

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their pardon, promised hereafter to be better Christians: and so prepared themselves to be reconciled and admitted to the holy communion at Easter.

It would be endless to recite all the passages we meet with in ecclesiastical writers concerning this matter; that penitents should, by such bodily afflictions as have been often named, take revenge upon themselves for their former wickedness; and undo what they had done before, by doing just the contrary.

St. Chrysostom, mentioning those words of John Baptist, *bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance*, puts this question, "How may we thus fructify?" And resolves it in this manner: "If we do directly contrary to our former sins. Hast thou stolen another man's goods? begin now to give away thine own. Hast thou been a fornicator? abstain even from thy lawful bed. Hast thou wronged any one in words, as well as deeds? bless hereafter even those that curse thee; do good to those who reproachfully use thee. Such revenge as this is very necessary; for a wounded man, as he adds, must not only pull the dart out of his body, but apply also suitable remedies to his wound. Hast thou therefore flowed in luxury and in drunkenness? make a compensation for it by fasting and abstinence. Hast thou cast impure eyes upon another's beauty? cover thy eyes, and hang down thy head; being touched with a greater caution, by the harm thou hast received."

And thus Tertullian[a], long before him, gives this brief admonition: "If thy neighbour ask thee, why thou defraudest thyself of thy food, and art so afflicted, &c., tell him, *Deliqui in Deum*, &c. I have offended God, I am in danger to perish eternally: and therefore now I hang down my head for shame, I macerate and excruciate myself; that God, whom I have injured by my sins, may be reconciled to me, &c."

Gregory the Great, though much later than either of them, hath left this excellent gloss upon the words before mentioned[b]: "You must observe that the friend of the Bridegroom (he means John Baptist) calls not only for *fruits of repentance*, but for *fruits meet*, or worthy and becoming repentance. It being one thing to *bring forth fruit*, another to *bring forth meet or worthy fruit*. For you must know, that he who hath not com-

[a] L. de Pœnit. c. xi. [p. 128 B.]
[b] [Lib. i. hom. 20. in Evang. § 8. tom. i. col. 1519 E.]

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mitted unlawful things may justly use those which are lawful: but he that hath done unlawful things, for instance, hath fallen into the guilt of fornication, or which is worse, of adultery, he ought to deny himself even those that are lawful; in proportion to the unlawful, which he remembers he hath given himself the liberty to enjoy. For there ought not to be equal fruits of repentance from those who have offended little, and from those who have offended much, (from those who since they have been devoted to God have led a regular life, and from those who have been very extravagant); but every one, according as he hath broken his vow to God less or more, with more or less expressions of grief and sorrow he ought to address himself to God for mercy."

I will add only the words of St. Ambrose to a corrupted virgin[c]: "According to the weight of the guilt must be the greatness of the repentance: and therefore thou must not repent in word only, but in deeds. Which may be thus done: if thou settest before thine eyes from what a great dignity thou art fallen, from what a book of life thy name is blotted out; and so believest thyself to be just next door to utter darkness, where there is endless *weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth*. When thou hast represented this to thyself by faith, then (since the soul that sins is liable to be cast into hell fire, and there is no remedy, after baptism, but only the comfort of repentance,) be content to endure any affliction, any labour, any sordid usage of thyself; if thou mayest but be delivered from eternal pains. And, if thou wilt be guided by me, be thou thyself the more cruel judge of thy own fact..... If the sinner (as it follows a little after) would not spare himself, God would spare him. If he would put himself to short pain here in this life, he might escape eternal pain in the future. A great wound must be searched into carefully, and have a long cure. A great sin must necessarily have a great satisfaction."

So he calls those acts of faithful penitents, confession, weeping, mourning, neglect of their bodily culture, prayers, fastings, alms, lying on the ground, wearing sackcloth, and such like things as were then inuse, by the name of *satisfaction*. Not because he thought they could properly make a compensation to God for their past crimes, and merit his pardon; but be-

[c] [De lapsu virginis consecratæ, cap. 8. tom. ii. coll. 314, 5.]

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cause they were pleasing and acceptable to him, when they were true significations of the inward compunction of their hearts; as well as gave satisfaction to the church, which enjoined these penances, to take off the scandal that had been cast upon religion by their sins. For he satisfies another that doth what he requires of him. Now God himself requires this of a sinner, that he *be afflicted, and mourn, and weep, and have his laughter turned into mourning, and his joy into heaviness, &c.*

And if he had not required it, yet nature itself presses us to it, when we are rightly affected towards him. For it is scarce possible, as Mr. Calvin well observes [d], that a soul struck with the dread of the divine judgment should not exact this of itself; and teach a man to prevent the vengeance of God, by being himself the avenger of his own sins. And the severer, saith he, we are to ourselves, and the sharper censure we pass upon our sins, the more propitious and merciful we may hope God will be unto us.

Which he seems to have borrowed from Tertullian in his book of Repentance [e]; where he hath these known words: "When repentance throws a man on the ground, it supports and relieves him. When it makes him all squalid, it renders him the more pure and clean. It excuses, when it accuses him. It absolves, when it condemns. And the less thou sparest thyself, believe me, the more will God spare thee."

Which is agreeable to the doctrine of St. Paul, that *if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged of the Lord* [f]. It is certain, that the judgment which he would have had the Corinthians prevent by judging themselves, was the sharp chastisements which God inflicted upon that church, by sickness, weakness, and death; as we read in the verse foregoing. In few words, it was his inflicting punishments upon them for their sins. And therefore it is most reasonable to think that this is the judgment he would have them pass upon themselves; which might, as I said, have prevented that judgment of God, and still might remove it. They should have afflicted and chastised themselves in a contrite manner, with fastings and mournings, and bewailing of their sins, and other humiliations: that so

[d] L. iii. Instit. cap. 3. sect. 15. [p. 157.] [e] Cap. ix. et x. [p. 127 B.]
[f] 1 Cor. xi. 31.

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there might have been no need of God's inflicting punishments upon them for their reformation, which they had already begun to inflict on themselves. For if by *being judged* in the latter part of the verse, be meant being punished (which is unquestioned), it seems the most agreeable interpretation of *judging ourselves* in the former part, if we understand thereby punishing ourselves by that severe discipline which I am treating of.

It is true indeed (for I will dissemble nothing that I know, nor strain any passage of Scripture to justify this doctrine) that the word we render *judge* in the beginning of the verse is not the very same with that which is in like manner so rendered by us in the conclusion; but in the Greek there is some difference when he saith, *if we would judge ourselves* (which is εἰ διεκρίνομεν), from the other, *we should not be judged*, which is οὐκ ἂν ἐκρινόμεθα. And it is further true, that St. Chrysostom[f] and Œcumenius[g] there expressly note that the apostle doth not say εἰ ἐκολάζομεν, 'if we would punish' ourselves, but only 'if we would sentence and condemn' ourselves as sinners; which they take to be the import of the word διακρίνειν.

But this notwithstanding, I cannot think the infliction of such punishments upon themselves as are the subject of this discourse (which are of a different kind from those inflicted by God, and so expressed by a different word) are here excluded. For to what do men sentence and condemn themselves (which St. Chrysostom makes the meaning of the word) but to suffer all that a just judge shall inflict, if he deal with them according to their deserts? And how could they think of inflicting less chastisements upon themselves than such humiliations as were then in use, whereby they acknowledged themselves to be unworthy to live?

In which, saith the apostle, if they had not favoured themselves, but pronounced and executed that sentence which their sins justly deserved, they might have been spared by God, and not punished, as some were, by those sicknesses and infirmities, nay, death, which he sent among them.

So that the full import of that word, *judge yourselves*, I conceive to be this: If you had strictly examined yourselves, and made an exact difference (so the word is expounded ver. 29.)

[f] [In loc. hom. xxviii. tom. x. p. 250 D.]
[g] [In loc. tom. i. p. 333 B.]

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between yourselves and those who had no sense of their irreverent behaviour towards our Lord; if you had acknowledged your errors, and condemned yourselves for them, and deprecated his displeasure by due humiliations and studied amendment; he would not have handled you in this manner, by sending a terrible plague upon you. For it cannot reasonably be denied, that in this *judging* or *condemning* themselves (translate it how you please) all things are contained which were or ought to have been the effects and fruits thereof; as in confession of sin the Scripture includes repentance, and the fruits of repentance, or amendment of life: and in the *exomologesis* of the ancient Christians the whole business of penance was contained; as appears sufficiently by the story I related of the deacon's wife in Asia. Now such humiliations as I have treated of were the effects of their condemning themselves, when they were deeply guilty, and as deeply sensible of their guilt: which the Corinthians were not, and so did not sue out their pardon in such an humble and afflicted manner as became such gross offenders; for if they had, they should not have fallen under such a severe discipline of Heaven as to have been *cut off* (which the Jews say was always by the hand of Heaven) from the land of the living.

In plainer terms, (which I take to be the truest interpretation of all,) if the church had judged, condemned, and exercised its censures as it ought to have done upon such offenders, and punished them for their faults, those punishments from the hand of God might have been spared.

And that is the cause still, perhaps, why many public judgments of God fall upon us in these days; because the church is negligent in calling offenders to an account, and they will not judge, that is, afflict themselves for their offences. There are great numbers, I doubt not, who condemn their sins in their own consciences, and condemn themselves also for them to deserve punishment from God; and this they imagine to be sufficient to make them capable of his mercy and forgiveness: whereas they ought to humble themselves with fasting and weeping and mourning, with neglect of their bodies, confession of their guilt, confusion of face, lamentable deprecations of God's displeasure, prayers and supplications, with works of mercy, which ought always to accompany fasting and prayer,

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as most becoming those who ask mercy of God, and as a revenge upon themselves for their covetousness and too great love of this present world. And because grievous sinners do not thus afflict themselves, with an unfeigned resolution of amendment, God himself is pleased to afflict them, by sending his plagues upon them, in one sort or other, to punish them.

CHAP. VII.

Some cautions to prevent misunderstanding in this matter.

THUS having proved what I undertook, that we ought not to content ourselves with inward sorrow alone, without all outward humiliations, and shown the use they have in religion, I proceed now, according to the method laid down in the beginning, to give some cautions to prevent the misunderstanding or abuse of this doctrine.

1. And, first of all, I would not be understood as if I thought they were of such an indispensable necessity that it is impossible for any sinner to obtain remission and absolution without them. No; the very history of the gospel shows the contrary: in which we find our Saviour, who *came to call sinners to repentance*, forgave several persons, who did not, like that woman in the viith of St. Luke, *kiss his very feet, wash them with her tears, and wipe them with the hair of her head.* All which were acts of great humiliation; especially the last, wherein she employed that to the meanest use which had been before her principal ornament and her pride.

My meaning therefore is, that these things are very useful (as hath been shown), and in some cases necessary, when penitents have been very licentious livers, and it is not likely they will otherwise be sufficiently sensible of what they have done and of what they have deserved, nor be so humbled as to be reclaimed and brought off from their evil courses.

2. They therefore who have constantly led a regular life, and are guilty only of the smaller sort of offences, must not take these things as spoken to them (unless it be on some occasions which shall be presently mentioned), which are intended for gross and scandalous sinners: such as that woman now

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named, who was a known harlot; unto whom our Lord forgave a great deal, when a little was forgiven unto Simon, who did none of these things[g].

3. Yet it may be very necessary even for those to take this course who are not such heinous offenders, in case of frequent relapses into the same sin; which must be cured by using themselves something severely. For though seldom slips (of the tongue suppose) may be easily corrected, yet frequent returns to folly, and that after solemn resolutions to the contrary, will require more pains and great humiliations, as a means, not only to give a stop to them, but to extirpate such roots of bitterness.

4. The best also ought to afflict themselves in times of public calamity, and upon days of solemn humiliation, when men are naturally disposed to that which may signify their seriousness, sobriety, sorrow, and unworthiness of the blessings they come to beg of the Father of mercies.

5. By which every one may understand that these humiliations are not always in season, as inward grief and sorrow is; but upon such occasions as I have mentioned; and also at certain appointed times which the church hath fixed, either weekly or yearly, for humiliation in general for our own and other men's sins, or for the bewailing those in particular who have deserved the censures of the church, when they are executed on them. Of which more hereafter.

6. At all which times care must be taken that these humiliations be true significations of our inward grief, and proceed from thence, and not merely external shows, used for fashion's sake, and to comply with the season. For without inward grief and resolutions to be better, they are so far from procuring any favour from God, that we may justly fear they further incense him, as being but a kind of mockery of him: which made the prophet Joel, in the place above named, bid the Israelites *rend their hearts, and not their garments;* not intending hereby to forbid the rending their garments (which he had in effect called for in the preceding words), but requiring them not to content themselves with that alone: because that was but a signification and token; and a sign, where there was

[g] Luke vii. 46, 47.

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nothing really signified thereby, could be nothing worth, but rather an abomination in the sight of God; who counts it a vile piece of hypocrisy when we present him with significations which in truth signify nothing, there being nothing within like to that which appears without.

7. And further, this caution must be used, that by these exercises we neither destroy the health of our bodies, nor suffer any ill affection to be bred in our minds. We ought not to make ourselves sick with fasting, nor so weaken ourselves by hard usage as to become unfit for our employments. And greater care ought to be taken, that we do not grow morose and sour, peevish and untoward unto others, while we are severe unto ourselves; and that the keeping ourselves under a strict discipline do not beget a secret pride in us, which makes us to think very highly of ourselves, and to contemn and despise others, just as the conceited pharisee did the poor publican[h].

But, above all, we must be watchful that such pride do not creep herewith into our hearts, as tempts men to fancy they have, by this discipline, highly merited at the hands of God, whom they had grievously offended.

Let such rocks as these be avoided, and then these bodily exercises, in their season and due measure, may prove very profitable: being designed for such other ends and uses as I have named; particularly as a means to prevent our relapsing into such sins as have cost us much affliction and trouble.

8. But, lastly, I desire it may be noted, that I do not pretend any obligation or fitness either for the use of all and every the very same tokens of inward grief, and of the sense we have of our vileness, whereby it was expressed in ancient days; but we are rather to declare the same thing by other signs which are more suitable to our own times.

For the reason, I have shown, why they sat down in sackcloth and ashes when they humbled themselves before God in the days of old, was, because then it was the custom of mourners in that manner to express the sense they had of the loss which they bewailed. But now that custom is quite antiquated; at least, in these parts of the world there are no such things

[h] Luke xviii. 11, 12.

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used by those that lament any worldly loss: and therefore we are no more bound to wear sackcloth on our bodies, and throw ashes on our heads, when we humble ourselves and mourn for our sins, than we are to rend our garments; which is not used in those churches where the other is still thought fit to be retained. But we are, as I said, to express the same thing by other signs and tokens, which are more proper to the age and the place wherein we live.

Now they that mourn (for a near relation or friend, suppose,) in these countries, are still wont to forbear their meat, to abstain from all manner of pleasures, to neglect the care and culture of their bodies, to retire themselves from company, to lay aside business, to shut up themselves in private, to cover their faces, to keep silence, to bewail their loss, and to refuse presently to be comforted. And thus it will become those who have highly offended God to bemoan and lament themselves after the selfsame manner, when they are in good earnest grieved for their sins.

As for whipping and lacerating the body, I do not find that it was ever used in the church anciently, either under the Old Testament or the New: but there are plain indications rather that they looked upon it as a paganish custom, which they were not to imitate. And indeed it represents God under a vile notion, as if he delighted in our blood, and was in love with cruelty: nor is there any thing like it to be found in the penances anciently enjoined in the Christian church, and therefore it is not to be approved. But such expressions of grief and sorrow are only to be used, as nature and the custom of the country direct us unto, in other cases of distress and sadness.

CHAP. VIII.

The use which wicked men ought to make of this doctrine.

By what hath been briefly said in this argument, all wicked men, who have highly provoked God by their lewd way of living, may see (if they please to open their eyes) into what a woful condition they have brought themselves: being un-

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worthy to eat or drink, to lift up their eyes unto heaven, to enjoy the light of the sun, or any of the least of those common blessings which God bestows upon all creatures: as sincere penitents have been constrained to acknowledge, by their deep humiliations, dejections, and abasement of themselves, even to the earth, before his offended Majesty.

So evil and bitter a thing it is to depart from God, and to cast his holy laws behind our backs, (with neglect, if not contempt,) in the opinion of all those who have been awakened to a lively sense of him, and of the duty which is owing to him. And whensoever they that now make a mock of sin shall become so serious as to reflect upon their ways, and consider solemnly how they have opposed God, and set themselves against his authority, it will strike them with the like consternation and amazement; and they will not think fit so much as to look up unto him whom they have so insolently affronted, without tears in their eyes, and with a most sad and sorrowful countenance.

Nay, the most dejected looks are best becoming great offenders, and the most doleful lamentations ought to come out of their mouths, if silence, confusion, astonishment, laying their hands on their mouths, or putting their mouths in the dust, be not much more beseeming; when they remember that they deserve to be thrust down into utter darkness, there to bewail their mad contempt of God in extreme horror and anguish of spirit.

And this is but the first step neither to the recovery of God's favour: unto which they should be glad, upon any terms, to be restored; and have just reason to look upon it as a bad sign, if they expect to recover it upon easier conditions than these. They have too slight thoughts of their misdoings, who look upon this injunction as too harsh and severe: *Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy into heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord*, &c. For if men's hearts be rightly affected, they will not only readily accord to this, but think they are very kindly used if they be, after all, received to mercy.

Nay, every honest heart will judge it reasonable that his sorrowful humiliations should bear some proportion to the

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offences of which he stands guilty. The more he hath provoked God's displeasure, the more he will be displeased at himself: his affliction will be the heavier; his sorrow the deeper and sadder; his loathing of himself the more vehement, as a very abominable creature; and consequently he will lay himself the lower, and be the more abased when he comes to sue for pardon.

There is nothing stranger than the carelessness of men about their souls, in this regard; as St. Chrysostom excellently discourses, in the beginning of his Comments upon the Epistle to the Corinthians. "You shall see many," saith he, "bathe themselves in tears, and refuse to be comforted, for a great many days, (his phrase is *μυρίας ἡμέρας*, 'a thousand days,') because they have lost some dear friend, a child, or some other relation, whom God hath taken out of the world. But though they lose their precious souls every day, they scarce ever lay it to heart, but slightly pass it over with a few sighs at the best. Nay, where shall we find the man that is so much as sorry for what he hath done? Who is there that groans, that smites his breast, that is full of solicitude, and care, and fear, lest he be undone? *Οὐδένα ἔγωγ' οἶμαι·* I think there is none: I am not acquainted with them: they are not to be met withal who are concerned about their souls, though they perish with a remedy just at hand.

"But what a wretchlessness is this! How dost thou think to be reconciled to God when thou art not so much as sensible that thou hast offended?

"Thou wilt say, But I do confess my sins, I do condemn myself for them. True, thou sayest so with thy mouth; but let thy heart tell me so. Sigh deeply at that word: sigh so sadly, that thou mayest ever hereafter be of good cheer. For if we did worthily grieve for our sins, if we sighed heartily for our offences, nothing else would make us sad: but this one trouble would drive away all other sadness." Thus he.

And then we may be bold to think we have worthily lamented our sins, and bewailed our wretched estate, when the affliction it hath given us makes us more fearful to offend hereafter. If we can find in our hearts so much as to play with the occasions of those sins which we have lamented; if we gaze with some pleasure upon the bait which entices us to them; if

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we love our old wicked company, or be so bold as to venture into it; if we draw as near a sin as we dare, it is a sign we do not sufficiently abhor it, nor have been sorrowful enough for it. For that would have made us more shy, more wary, more timorous of relapsing into so dangerous an estate, and afraid to approach near to those snares wherein we had been entangled; and thereby suffered such affliction as can never be recompensed with any pleasures but those of pleasing God in all things.

Let us not deceive ourselves then; no, not with sorrow and affliction of spirit, and the greatest humiliations before God, if they be not attended with a change in the whole course of our life. Till sorrow hath wrought this effect, we have no reason to think that we have sorrowed after a godly sort. We lay aside the afflicting ourselves too soon, and speak comfort to our souls before they be fit for it; if our grief hath not made an absolute divorce between us and our sins, never to come together again. For so the apostle teaches us in that known place[1], *Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of.* Sorrow is an unprofitable thing, unless it work repentance; and repentance is unprofitable, if it be only a good fit, and we return again to the sins which we renounced. Let us not conclude therefore too hastily that we are penitents: sorrow alone doth not make us so; no, nor a present change in the course of our life: but that change must continue and hold out when we come to be tried, and are placed again among our usual temptations. Of which till we have had some experience, let us be modest, not confident, in the opinion we have of our godly sorrow; and judge rather we have not sufficiently lamented our sins than speedily pronounce ourselves absolved from them.

It was the custom in the primitive church for those who were upon the point of suffering martyrdom for Christ to write letters before they died in the behalf of lapsed Christians who were in the state of penance, desiring the bishops that they might be reconciled and received to the peace of the church. But good bishops would not easily consent to this, unless they saw real signs of amendment in the penitents; and

[1] 2 Cor. vii. 10.

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they likewise earnestly desired the martyrs not to be too easy in granting these letters, or in promising to sue for them, but to consider how solicitous their predecessors were to have such sinners truly humbled, and how cautious to observe the kind and quality of the sins which they lamented in the state of penance. Nay, there were some martyrs so wise as to reprove this giving of the peace of the church, before they were so humbled as to be reformed; *ne dum volumus ruinis importune subvenire, alias majores ruinas videamur parare,* (as I find Moses and Maximus, and other confessors, speak most judiciously in St. Cyprian[j], who himself hath an admirable discourse to the same purpose[k],) 'lest while we desire unseasonably to raise up lapsed Christians out of their ruins, we make way for their greater fall, and utterly undo them.'

They took care so to heal one breach as not to make another and more dangerous: so to cure a wound, as not to make a new one harder to be cured: so to restore penitents, that they did not relapse into a more deplorable condition. For they saw clearly that by speaking peace to them too soon, before they were so soundly humbled and grievously afflicted as to be heartily established in new resolutions, they became less fearful to offend; and looked not so carefully to their ways as they would have done, if they had suffered more for their former offences.

Let us take the same care about our own souls, and not be too forward to conclude we have made our peace with God, though we have been never so sorrowful: when there are no credible signs that we are so afflicted for what we have done as never to venture to do the like again. No prince will pardon upon other terms; and it is directly against all reason to think that the Sovereign of the world will be content to lose all the obedience which is owing from his creatures, whom he hath made with a sense of duty to him. No cries, though lamentable beyond all expression, can persuade him to this; and therefore it is foolish and presumptuous to expect it, especially since he hath declared the contrary, and told us as plainly as words can express it, that *the wrath of God is revealed against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men*[l]; and

[j] [Epist. xxxi. p. 64.] [k] [De Lapsis, p. 121, seqq.] [l] Rom. i. 18.

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that *except we be converted, and become like little children,* (pliable to the will of our heavenly Father,) *we cannot enter into his kingdom*[m]. Which our Saviour pronounces with such an earnest asseveration as is apt to awaken our attention to what he says there and in many other places: which is utterly inconsistent with the imagination, that it is sufficient to dispose us for his favour, if we acknowledge our errors, and be sorry for them, and bewail them, without any further alteration.

CHAP. IX.

What use the better sort ought to make of this.

And as our tears ought not to stop till they have wrought a thorough alteration in our hearts and in the course of our life; so, after that is wrought, there will be still occasion for them, and they must not be quite dried up. My meaning is, that they who by the grace of God have reformed their lives, and done away their former sins by an unfeigned sorrowful repentance, (or they who perhaps never highly offended God, but have been only guilty of smaller faults,) ought not to think themselves wholly unconcerned in this doctrine, and to have no cause for being afflicted with such mourning, weeping, and humiliations, as I have mentioned. They have great reason indeed to *rejoice in the Lord always,* and to praise him for his wonderful goodness towards them: but this is so far from shutting out all sorrow, that it is a part of that holy life unto which they are renewed by repentance, to be full of tender compassion towards others, and to bewail their miserable condition.

And therefore, beside some degree of sadness and sorrow which is due for lesser offences, or for greater formerly committed, though now amended; there are two things which are really very lamentable, and ought to be sadly laid to heart by the best of us. First, the public judgments which God at any time sends upon the place or kingdom where we live. Secondly, the obstinate wickedness of most offenders, who, notwithstanding these judgments, will not *turn unto him that smiteth them, nor seek the Lord,* as the prophet's words are[n].

[m] Matt. xviii. 3. [n] Isaiah ix. 13.

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I. When people will not judge themselves, (as I have said before in the sixth chapter,) and the offenders are so many, that the church, perhaps, cannot judge, that is, punish them; God takes the matter into his own hand, and some way or other inflicts such punishments on them as he did upon the Corinthians. In which case, the few good that are among them ought to lament them and weep over them, as they should have done if the censures of the church had been denounced and executed upon them. For which there is the greater reason, because, as they are members of the same body, so they are in danger to suffer with them in the same common calamity; especially if they do not humble themselves to deprecate God's heavy displeasure.

If we make a particular application of this to ourselves in this nation, we are very blind if we do not see that the hand of God, as the prophet speaks, hath been divers ways stretched out against us; in a destroying pestilence, even then when the sword of war was also drawn between us and our neighbours; and afterwards in a devouring fire, whereby many fair buildings and holy places were laid in ashes: which are things that ought not to be forgotten, though, alas! they little now affect men's minds. And therefore we have been again terrified by the great hazard the church and kingdom was lately in, when their old enemies struggled once more to get the upper hand, and had brought us even to the brink of the precipice, where we stood for some time trembling to think what would become of us. And though we were then mercifully delivered, yet when we consider how restless the spirit of sedition and rebellion hath been since among us, and brought us again so near the very same dreadful danger, that we were just upon the point of beholding all order and government overturned; all serious Christians cannot but think that this is a *lamentation*, as the prophet's words are, and ought to be for a lamentation.

The prevention, indeed, of that utter confusion by a wonderful Providence, ought to fill our hearts with joy; but the thoughts of such frequent calamities which have threatened us ought to put us in fear also, lest in conclusion they should fall upon us, if neither God's mercies nor his judgments can amend us. The only way to keep them off is, for all good men and women to humble themselves, and weep in secret for these

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things. On which they cannot cast their eyes seriously to take a view of them, but they will find them soliciting their tears and their sighs, and hear them call upon them to be *afflicted and mourn*, and to *let their joy* (sometimes at least) *be turned into heaviness*. This alone is a sad and melancholy sight, to behold the spirit of blindness and giddiness, of faction and rebellion, that hath seized on a great part of the nation: our senseless contentions and oppositions, the wide breaches and divisions, for which we can see no healing, may justly challenge (if there were nothing else to trouble us) *great thoughts and searchings of heart*.

II. Especially if we consider the other thing, not only how insensible most people are of all such matters, (which in bodily distempers is counted the worst symptom in the world,) but how few have been amended by the public judgments which have either threatened us, or fallen upon us. The complaint which God makes by the prophet may still be continued, *In vain have I smitten your children, they received no correction*[o]: and which the prophet makes to God, *O Lord, are not thine eyes upon the truth? Thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction: they have made their faces harder than a rock, they have refused to return*[p]. For which stubborn impiety and impudent wickedness (which hath everywhere too much abounded among us) every good man ought to be very much afflicted; and not only content himself with this, that he doth not follow them in their ungodly practices, but *bewail also as many as have sinned, and have not repented* (as the apostle speaks) *of the uncleanness, and fornication, and lasciviousness*, (and other abominable sins,) *which they have committed*[q].

For this is really the saddest spectacle of all other, to behold such numbers as have not been at all touched with any remorse for their own sins, nor any grief for public calamities, nor any fear of future danger; but have taken their pleasures to the full, in the most sorrowful times that this nation hath seen, and would not abate of their mirth and laughter in the least, when all things looked cloudily about them, but encouraged

[o] Jer. ii. 30. [p] Jer. v. 3. [q] 2 Cor. xii. ult.

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one another to think only of eating and drinking, and rising up to play; which all sober men cannot but look upon to be as unseemly a sight as if men should go and dance about their parents or nearest relations when they saw them a dying.

The ancient Pythagoreans were wont, when any person forsook their school, to set a coffin in the place where he used to sit, and then to make a solemn funeral for him; bewailing him with their tears, as one that was really dead[r]. And we have not well *learned Christ*, as the apostle speaks, if we do not think we have greater reason to bewail those who have so far forsaken God, and their holy religion, that nothing he can say or do will move them to a sober sadness: but they go on with a stiff neck and an hard heart to laugh at all goodness. They are in so deplorable a condition, that we may give them up for dead, and take up a lamentation over them as lost men, who will never have any feeling, and therefore are the greatest objects of all good men's pity; who have reason to mourn for them, and follow them with their tears, as they would a friend that is carried to his grave: or rather, they are more to be lamented, because they are dead even while they live, according to that of the son of Sirach, *Seven days do men mourn for the dead: but for a fool, and for an ungodly man, all the days of his life*[s].

And if we take into our consideration the causes of that bold confidence which hath made them mock at all seriousness, even when we have been in the greatest dangers, we shall see still the greater reason for our humiliations. They may be resolved into these two: first, their obstinate unbelief; which makes them contemn all that is told them of future danger: and, secondly, their pride and scornfulness, which makes them despise even God's present chastisements.

[r] [Οἱ Πυθαγόρειοι κενοταφίαν φκοδομοῦν τοῖς μετὰ τὸ προτραπῆναι ἐπὶ τὴν φιλοσοφίαν παλινδρομήσασιν ἐπὶ τὸν ἰδιωτικὸν βίον. — Orig. contr. Cels. lib. ii. § 12. tom. i. p. 398 A; lib. iii. § 51. p. 481 D. Other writers recount the same practice to have been observed in the case of those disciples who at the final initiation were discarded, or who for divulging the secrets of the sect, or other unworthy conduct, were expelled the school.—Jambl. Vit. Pythag. c. 17. p. 60, et 34. p. 198; Brucker, Hist. Philos. tom. i. p. 1031; Scheffer, de Philos. Ital. cap. 12. p. 124. The instance of Hipparchus is mentioned by Clement of Alexandria, Strom. lib. v. cap. 9. p. 680.]

[s] Ecclus. xxii. 12.

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As for the first of these, it is too notorious, that many men have hardened their hearts against the belief of the judgment to come in the other world. Which dull infidelity leads them into all manner of licentious living; and lets their furious desires loose, to run without any check or bridle into the foulest profaneness. And when they are deeply drenched in the pleasures of sense, they scarce believe any thing they do not see: but give as little credit to other histories as they do to the records in the Book of God. Or at best, they pish at them, and persuade themselves that their case is so much different from those nations who have been ruined by such sins as they commit, that they need not affright themselves with their sad examples.

There is a strange relation commonly observed in the Roman story, of the *equus Sejanus*, a famous horse which belonged to a gentleman of Rome called Sejus[s]. Which was highly admired by everybody for his goodly shape, fine colour, and delicate pace: but so unfortunate, that he never had any master who was not undone. His first owner, Sejus, lost his head: the next, Dolabella, perished in a battle: Cassius, the next, made away himself at Philippi: and Anthony, his last master, died after a most infamous manner. There was none of these, who had seen the fall of his predecessor, but mounted his back with a persuasion that he should have better luck than the person that went before him. The beautiful shape of the beast more tempted them than the ill fortune of his masters (which in those days was wont to be superstitiously observed) could deter them. And thus truly it is now; though there be a great many instances of particular persons, and whole nations, that have been utterly undone by such riotous and profane courses as great numbers violently prosecute, though they read of the fall of sundry flourishing empires, by reason of their luxury and excess, injustice and impiety, &c.; yet it moves them not at all to forsake their evil ways, in which they hope to be more prosperous. Tell them of the Babylonians, of the Persians, of the Greeks and Romans, (not to say what the holy story relates of the Jews, and of many famous Christian churches,) the pleasures of sin are more alluring than all these dismal examples affrighting to their hearts.

[s] [Aul. Gell. Noctt. Attic. lib. iii. cap. 9.]

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And though they have seen several breaches made upon their worldly happiness, though sundry calamities have invaded the nation wherein they live, enough to strike terror into considering minds, yet *the wicked, by reason of the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God* [t]. Which was the second thing I noted; the evils which they see and feel do not much move them, because they think it is a sign of a poor and mean spirit to be daunted. They look upon it as a sneaking thing to mourn, and to be afflicted, to humble themselves, (though only with the external signs of it,) and imagine that nothing becomes men of quality but to be merry and joyful.

We read in the history of the East Indies, that among other pagans in those parts, there are some called Rasboutes [u], who have such perverse opinions concerning honour, that they think it a baseness in them (who never shun any danger) so much as to stir out of an house when it is on fire. Nay, that some of them, if they come to a pit or a precipice, which the beast under them would avoid, are wont to spur him on, and leap down into their certain destruction; imagining that by such inconsiderate, and more than brutish actions, they acquire the reputation of an heroical courage. And such senseless resolution many seem to be possessed withal among ourselves. For none of God's judgments which encounter them can make them turn out of their way, or alter a jot the course of their life: but they think it a generous thing not to be startled at them; they esteem it unmanly to humble themselves, though it be before the Almighty. They have the courage to march on, not to say into hell fire, in the bottomless pit, (for those they take for fables, which signify nothing to them,) but into that which of all other things one would think they should most tenderly avoid, the ruin of their honour, and their credit, and their estates, nay, and of their health, and their dear life itself.

For these men we ought to mourn; because we know not what else to do for them. They are too stubborn to be counselled. They are like men in a phrensy; that are angry with

[t] [Ps. x. 4.]

[u] Mandelslo's Trav. p. 73. [Davies' translation, fol. Lond. 1662.—The Rájpút tribes, or military caste of India, here referred to, have been in all ages characterised by similar romantic traits of bravery and punctilious notions of honour. See Elphinstone's India, vol. i. p. 607.]

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those who would take the knife from them wherewith they are going to cut their own throats. They will not endure a check or reproof, no, not so much as good advice: and therefore are the more to be bewailed by all good men, who ought to be afflicted, and mourn, and weep on their behalf, seeing they have no compassion on themselves.

And if these senseless sinners could by any means be so far awakened out of their lethargy as to think seriously, though they regarded nothing the example of former times, or any thing of that nature: yet these two things might a little startle them, could they be persuaded to reflect now and then upon them.

First, that they are mortal, and it will not be long perhaps before they be summoned to their graves: and then it is not likely they will have the very same thoughts about them which they now have. The sight of death will bring down their proud stomachs, and humble them a little, when they see they are dust and ashes. It may make them think also what a comfort it would then be to believe that something in them shall still live, if they could but hope withal to have the eternal God for their friend: whom though now they forget, yet it is possible they may then remember.

Would to God they could be prevailed withal to place themselves now in the same posture wherein they shall be upon their deathbed, and see what effect it would have upon their heart. It becomes men that pretend unto wit to look before them; and to take care not to be surprised with passions they never thought of, and such also as will mightily daunt them, unless their spirits be quite benumbed.

But if they will not be at this pains, let them at least cast their eyes upon those whom they themselves have known sadly to bemoan and bewail their miserable condition when they came to die. That is the other thing which it is possible may do them some good; for then it is frequent with them to condemn all their wicked courses, and to wish for a little time to reconcile themselves to him whom they have highly offended. Then they find Solomon a wiser man than they imagined; who thus forewarns one of these lewd livers, to take up in time, (as we speak,) *lest thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body is consumed, and say, How have I hated instruction,*

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and my heart despised reproof; and have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me! I was almost in all evil in the midst of the congregation and assembly[u].

Now how much better, how much more becoming men of parts, is it thus to bewail themselves in good time, before they have wasted themselves in wickedness! and so, to love instruction, to thank those that reprove them, to obey their teachers, to incline their ears to their godly admonitions, to endeavour to do as much good as they have done evil, and that *in the midst* of the people; openly giving glory to God by their public repentance, whom they have boldly dishonoured by their scandalous wickedness!

This might avail them, and prove acceptable unto his offended Majesty; but to bewail themselves thus only at the last gasp, or when they can no longer act their wickedness, nobody can tell how it will be taken. But they have just reason to fear, lest the same measure be dealt to them with which Solomon saith some shall be served; whose dreadful doom is recorded in the first chapter of his wise instructions in these remarkable words: *Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you.*

Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord. They would none of my counsel; they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices[x].

From which terrible sentence God, of his infinite mercy, deliver us! And let all that read these things endeavour to deliver themselves by hearkening to such good counsel as hath been here given: that is, by *turning to the Lord with all their heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning.*

[u] Prov. v. 11, 12. [x] Prov. i. 24, 25, &c.

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PART II.

CONCERNING FASTING.

CHAP. X.

What is meant by fasting.

Among those humiliations wherewith penitent sinners ought to prostrate themselves before God to sue for mercy, the reader cannot but observe that *fasting* hath been frequently mentioned, as holding a principal place. And therefore I think it useful to treat a little of it by itself: the church having set apart certain times for it, wherein if those wicked men I now spoke of will not humble themselves, and repent of their evil doings, whereby they are pulling down judgments upon themselves and upon others; yet all good men should embrace the opportunities of casting down themselves frequently before God, to join with God's ministers in those supplications (like them prescribed in the prophet Joel, upon their solemn fast[a]): "Spare us, good Lord, spare thy people whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood, and be not angry with us for ever." Beseeching him to "deliver us," as "from all blindness of heart," &c., so more especially "from all sedition, privy conspiracy and rebellion; from all false doctrine, heresy and schism; from hardness of heart, and contempt of his word and commandment." Which solemn prayers were never more necessary than in these days; and for that reason fasting ought not to be neglected, but attend upon them, as an help unto them, and a means to make them more effectual. This shall be proved when I have first shown what fasting is.

And, in proper speaking, fasting is an abstinence from all manner of food; whether it be meat or drink. As we may be satisfied (if it need any proof) from that question which was

[a] Joel ii. 17.

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asked our Saviour, *Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise the Pharisees, but thine eat and drink*[b]? Which place is remarkable for two things; for it shows both that prayers were a concomitant of fasting, as I said just now, and that fasting is so opposite to eating and drinking, that he who eats and drinks doth not fast. Which is still more confirmed by the words wherein the other evangelists put this question, which are these: *Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not*[c]? Here they call that *not fasting*, which St. Luke calls *eating and drinking*; it being one and the same thing *to eat and drink*, and *not to fast*. Nor is any other notion to be found of fasting in the Holy Scripture, or in any ancient writer, Jewish or Christian, but this:—forbearance of all manner of meat and drink while the fast lasts.

Some think indeed, that, speaking improperly, there are examples in scripture of fasts, which consisted only in abstinence from the better sort of food, and contenting themselves with harder fare. Thus Josephus saith, that the fast which Esther and her maidens observed, together with the Jews in Shushan, when they neither did eat nor drink three days, night nor day, was forbearing all delicate meat and drink for that time, as Grotius observes out of him upon Esther iv. 16. Which may receive some confirmation from what Daniel saith of himself: *In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks; I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled*[d]. His mourning (which comprehends fasting) was nothing else, it should seem, but abstinence from all things pleasant and desirable (as the word is in the Hebrew language), while he allowed himself a coarser sort of diet, which nothing but mere necessity commended to his appetite.

And if we let this pass for truth, it doth not prejudice what I said of fasting; that usually, and speaking exactly, it signifies eating and drinking nothing at all. And if the holy writers speak otherwise, it is upon some extraordinary occasion, when the humiliation continued so long that it was impossible to fast strictly, without any refection at all: as it was in these fasts

[b] Luke v. 33. [c] Mark ii. 18; Matt. ix. 14. [d] Dan. x. 2, 3.

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of three days and three weeks. But I am not satisfied that Daniel's mourning was such as hath been now supposed; for his words may signify no more but that, when he did eat and drink, nothing that was pleasant came into his mouth. And then his meaning is, that for three weeks he kept a fast, eating and drinking nothing at all till the evening (as the manner was on fasting days), and then abstaining from flesh and wine, and using only a coarser sort of bread. For thus Ezra fasted, eating *no bread at all, nor drinking water: for he mourned because of the transgression of them that had been carried away* [e], just as Daniel did. The fast of Esther indeed doth not so easily admit this interpretation; because they did in that neither eat nor drink three days, *night or day;* but if we take the words rigidly, they will not admit of Josephus's interpretation, no more than of this; for they that fare hardly do notwithstanding eat and drink. And therefore I am apt to think the true meaning is, that they made no set meal at all, neither night nor day; but if any of them was forced to taste any thing for the support of nature (which might otherwise have failed in some constitutions), it was privately, and of the meanest sort of food. Or according to the usual manner of fasts, they ate and drank nothing at all, neither in the day nor in the night, for three whole days and nights together; save only in the evening, and then also they forbare all manner of delicate food.

The sum of what need be said in this matter is, that a complete and perfect fast consists in total abstinence from all meat and drink until the evening: and then also in eating and drinking sparingly, and that of the meaner sort of food. An imperfect and partial fast consists in abstinence from some kind of food which we most love; or in feeding sparingly of any kind, and denying our appetite that full satisfaction which it desires, at the usual times of repast.

They that cannot endure the first of these may yet easily bear the last; and therein perform something of this duty of fasting: if their abstinence either in the quality or quantity of meat and drink do in some measure afflict them, while in some measure it also refreshes them. For no abstinence can partake

[e] Ezra x. 6.

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in the least of the nature of fasting, if there be not something in it that afflicts us: which, I shall show hereafter, is the very thing designed in fasting.

And thus perhaps we are to understand our church, in that part of its tables and rules which are set down before the Common-prayers concerning "days of fasting, or abstinence." The particle *or* may either signify abstinence to be another name for fasting, or it may distinguish abstinence from fasting, as a lesser thing. If we follow the latter sense, then the intention of the church is, that upon all those days there named they that are able should fast; that is, wholly forbear all food till the evening: and they who are not able to do this, yet should abstain from all delicate food, and feed abstemiously; so that while they give nature some support, they also afflict and humble it. In short, they that cannot wholly abstain on those days, yet should abstain from set meals; and take privately some slender refreshment.

CHAP. XI.

Of the obligation we have to fast.

THERE being no positive precept left by our blessed Saviour about fasting, some have thence concluded it is a matter of liberty and not of necessity: that is, we may use it if we please, but are not tied to the practice of it. But before they had made this conclusion, they should have considered that there is no such precept neither for prayer to God; but only directions how to pray, as there are also how to order ourselves when we fast. And therefore the proper inference from that observation (of there being no positive precept for fasting) should have been this: that there was no need of any precept to enjoin this duty, it being no less known and practised by all good men than prayer to God, and giving of alms: with which it is joined in our Saviour's famous Sermon on the Mount[f]. In which sermon our Lord, instructing his disciples about the principal duties of a Christian life, it is not to be thought that

[f] Matt. vi. 1, 2, 3, &c.; 16, 17.

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he would have mentioned this, unless he intended it should be one part of our Christian duty. Which being not in downright terms commanded, as some others are, but only supposed, it is so much the more to be regarded, as a duty unto which there is an antecedent obligation; so plain and so commonly owned, that he needed to do no more but only teach them to what they should have respect in the performance of it: adding, moreover, that so performed as he directed, it would be accepted with God, and openly rewarded by him. Which is a further confirmation that it is a Christian duty, because there is the very same promise made to the regular practice of it that there is to *giving alms* and to *prayer*.

Which as they are natural duties, which men learnt without any institution, so I take *fasting* to be also: all mankind being inclined to abstain from meat and drink when they are in great grief and sorrow; and when they have any serious business to which they would apply their minds, such as meditation, especially, and solemn prayer. And therefore all nations, from ancient times, have used fasting as a part of repentance, and as a means to turn away God's anger: as we may gather from the Ninevites, who *proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth from the greatest of them even to the least*[g]; hoping God would turn from his fierce anger denounced against them, if they turned every man from his evil way; for which, by these humiliations, they professed themselves heartily sorry. Which was not a notion peculiar to them, but to all the world, I could, without much labour, show, if this little book were not designed for other purposes. Those words of our Saviour may suffice to show us the inclinations of other countries as well as of the Jews[h]; where he saith, if *Tyre and Sidon* had enjoyed such means of being good as *Chorazin and Bethsaida* had, *they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes*: that is, humbled themselves with fasting, after the example of the Ninevites; for on such solemn occasions they put on sackcloth, and threw ashes on their heads; which usually accompanied fasting, as fasting did prayer to God for mercy.

And for this cause John Baptist's disciples, we read in the Gospel, *fasted oft*, he *baptizing them* (as St. Paul speaks[i]) *with*

[g] Jonah iii. 5, 6, &c. [h] Matt. xi. 22. [i] Acts xix. 4.

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the baptism of repentance: that he might prepare them to receive our Lord. Who was so far from reproving this practice, either of theirs or of the Pharisees, as a superfluous thing, that he saith his disciples hereafter should do the same. For the present indeed he did not press it upon them; but the only reason was, that it was not then in season. For fasting is proper for mourners; but while he was with them it was a time of joy altogether, the great Jubilee[k], when it was as improper to fast as to forbear to eat and drink at a wedding. This is the sense of his answer to those that questioned, why his disciples fasted not at all, when those of John and of the Pharisees *fasted often*[l]. And he seems, to me, to mean no more in those words which follow[m], *No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment*, &c.: *neither do men put new wine into old bottles*, &c., but this only; that congruity is to be observed in all things. For that is the thing he had said before: mourning (of which fasting was a part) did not suit with the bride-chamber; and the suitableness of one thing to another is always to be attended; for if we mind not how they agree and sort together, we shall commit such indecencies as are expressed by those two following comparisons.

St. Chrysostom indeed understands these comparisons, (and most now follow him herein,) as if our Lord had said, that his disciples, being yet raw and infirm, were not able to bear the severe discipline of fasting; but might receive hurt by it, as an old garment doth by the sewing a new piece of cloth to it, and old bottles by putting new wine into them. But, besides other objections that may be made to this, which I cannot answer, it seems unaccountable why Christ's disciples should not be as strong as John's; and very hard to affirm that John imposed such discipline upon his disciples as Christ judged would be prejudicial and noxious unto his.

I rest therefore in the forenamed exposition, which agrees with the scope of our Saviour: who intended not to reject fasting, or to say his disciples were not yet fit for it, but that it was not yet fit for them. For there being *to every thing a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven, in which time God had made every thing beautiful*, (as Solomon speaks

[k] Luke iv. 18, 19. [l] Matt. ix. 14. [m] Ver. 16, 17.

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in Eccles. iii. 1, 11,) now was the time of gladness, (while he was present in person with them, and they were in the midst of the marriage-feast mentioned Matt. xxii. 2, 3, &c.,) in which fasting was unbeseeming: but the time of mourning was coming, (when he was taken away from them, and they fell into great distresses,) and in those days they would fast without any bidding.

And accordingly we find they were in *fastings often*, as St. Paul speaks of himself[n], and herein, as well as all things else, *approved themselves as ministers of God*[o], and taught others also the frequent use hereof: which was observed so carefully in all following ages, that St. Basil boldly pronounces repentance without fasting to be an idle business[p].

But the practice of the church shall be the subject of another chapter, when I have first shown, in the next, of what use fasting is in religion. And I shall end this chapter with this plain proof of the truth of what hath been said: which will serve for an introduction to what follows.

If it be a duty to call ourselves to an account for our sins, to humble ourselves before God, to repent and to beg pardon for them, we may easily know what obligation we have to fasting: and it may safely be referred to the judgment of any man of common sense, whether it become a penitent to present himself before God, full or fasting; and in which of these ways he thinks sorrow and grief is to be expressed, and the compassion of him whom we have offended most likely to be moved.

CHAP. XII.

The ends and uses of religious fasting.

FASTING serves as a help to so many Christian duties, with which it is frequently joined, that I cannot mention them all in this little treatise. Wherein I consider it chiefly as an act of Humiliation, and a part of Repentance: whereby we both abase ourselves before God, and acknowledge our unworthiness of the least of his mercies, and also afflict and punish ourselves

[n] 2 Cor. xi. 27. [o] vi. 4, 5. [p] [Μετάνοια χωρὶς νηστείας ἀργή.] Hom. 1. de Jejunio. [§ 3. tom. ii. p. 3 B.]

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for our former excesses and other sins: which it helps us also to cure, and is a remedy against.

That it is an act of abasement, and serves to humble and lay us low in our own thoughts, the Psalmist in so many words tells us, when he saith, *My clothing was sackcloth: I humbled my soul with fasting*[q]. Nor had sackcloth, or any other part of the ancient discipline, a different meaning: for, by putting on such coarse clothing, (as Mr. Mede observes[r],) they ranked themselves with men of the meanest and lowest condition. Which was the intention also of putting ashes and sometimes earth upon their heads, as if they were below the lowest of God's creatures: and of sitting or lying upon the ground, with which, by that posture, they levelled themselves. And, it may be added, *of pouring out water before the Lord*, which was a very ancient ceremony upon their fasting-days[s] in token of their humiliation, saith Rabbi Solomon[t] upon that place: as if they had said, "Behold, O Lord, we are before thee as these waters that are poured out;" that is, nothing worth. The same they confessed by abstaining from all sort of food; which was an acknowledgment that they were not worthy to live upon God's earth any longer. Thus when *Ahab rent his clothes*[x], (which was another act of humiliation, making them look like beggars,) *and put sackcloth on his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly*, (as a man quite dejected,) God himself calls this *Ahab's humbling himself before him*[y]; and promises thereupon to remit something of the sentence pronounced against him, in not executing it so soon as was intended.

And that it is a natural effect and expression of sorrow, I need not trouble myself to demonstrate. Daniel calls it by the name of *mourning*[z]. And what he calls *mourning and eating no pleasant bread*, in the beginning of the chapter, the angel afterward, taking special notice of it, calls *chastening himself before his God*[a]. And so we translate the Psalmist's words[b], *When I wept, and chastened my soul*

[q] Ps. xxxv. 13.

[r] [Book i. Disc. 31. Works, p. 213.]

[s] 1 Sam. vii. 6.

[t] [Apud Drusium, inter Critic. Sacr. ad loc. col. 825.]

[x] 1 Kings xxi. 27.

[y] Ver. 29.

[z] Dan. x. 2, 3.

[a] Ver. 12.

[b] Ps. lxix. 10.

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with fasting, &c. For no abstinence or sorrow can deserve the name of penitence, but such as is afflictive: which is so much intended in fasting, that they are words of the same signification; according to that known rule among the Jews, "Wheresoever the Scripture speaks of afflicting the soul, it means fasting." Thus the great fast appointed by God to be yearly observed on the seventh day of the tenth month is described in Lev. xvi. 29, 31: *It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls by a statute for ever. And whatsoever soul it be* (as it follows, xxiii. 29) *that shall not be afflicted on that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people.* And this was the end of all other fasts, as appears by those words of Ezra, (which are the most express of any to this purpose,) *Then I proclaimed a fast, at the river Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God*[c]. For hunger and thirst is, in itself, troublesome and painful to the body, as St. Austin very well observes: *Nam fames et sitis dolores sunt: urunt, et sicut febris necant, nisi alimentorum medicina succurrat*[d]: and should call to our mind the true cause of all pain and anguish; that our conscience, feeling the sharp stings of guilt, and we *being pricked in the heart*, (as the apostle speaks,) may more thankfully embrace the remedy, and speedily also seek for relief by an unfeigned repentance.

Fasting hath also something of a penal chastisement in it: whereby we take revenge upon ourselves (as I showed in the fifth chapter), and punish ourselves for the intemperance of our former life.

Which by this means we also begin to amend; it being an act of self-denial, and of no small consideration, for therein we deprive ourselves of those satisfactions which we naturally much desire, and which we might also most lawfully enjoy. Whereby likewise, it is manifest, we inure ourselves to *endure hardship, as good soldiers of Jesus Christ*, and are in a preparation to suffer for his name's sake; which was another notion the ancients had of it.

It helps also to *keep under* or beat down *our body, and to bring it into subjection*, as St. Paul speaks 1 Corinth. ix. 27; where in these terms he relates the discipline he exercised upon himself; which Peter Martyr allows to be meant of his

[c] Ezra viii. 21. [d] Lib. x. Confess. [cap. 31. tom. i. col. 185 E.]

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fasting: whereby the "flesh being subdued to the Spirit" (as it is in the Collect for the first Sunday in Lent, which excellently explains the words of St. Paul), we are disposed "ever to obey his godly motions in righteousness and true holiness." To which a pampered body will not let us listen, for it kicks against them and resists them; and therefore its food is to be sometimes withdrawn (as provender is from a wanton beast), that being tamed it may become more pliable to our minds, and they may with less opposition be brought to submit, body and soul, unto the holy instructions of the word of God. Which, by the way, St. Paul thought so necessary a piece of Christian discipline, that he was afraid of being lost and rejected by God if it were neglected. For that was the reason why he treated his body severely, *lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.* And therefore they are strangely confident people who fancy there is no need of such mortifications, no danger from a body full fed; for which it is their only care to provide the best they can, but never to beat down. They, in effect, make themselves more spiritual than St. Paul; for whom if they had a due reverence, they would *not be high-minded, but fear* [e], and, after his example, use such abstinence, that their body grow not unruly, and thereby endanger their salvation.

Unto which fasting, if rightly used, contributes so much, that it serves to ends quite contrary to those of humiliation, abasement, and affliction; for, by bringing the body into subjection, it helps to raise our minds to heavenly thoughts, for which all men find themselves most fit, not when they are full, but when they are fasting.

And that it was anciently looked upon as a help to prayer, this is a convincing argument, that the Jews were wont upon their sabbaths to eat and drink nothing till the Divine service was over in the morning: by which St. Peter satisfies them that he and the rest of the apostles could not be thought drunk on the day of Pentecost (as some mockers said they were when they heard them speak various languages), since it was but *the third hour of the day* [f]; that is, nine o'clock in the morning: as much as to say, Divine service was not yet begun, and there-

[e] [Rom. xi. 20; 1 Tim. vi. 17.] [f] Acts ii. 15.

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fore they must suppose them fasting, unless, contrary to their known behaviour, they would judge them to have no sense of religion. Upon which score Christians have been wont to fast—especially before the holy communion: partly out of reverence to God, who they thought ought to be served before themselves; and partly to fit them for meditation and prayer, wherein they were more easily lifted up above when their bodies were empty and their minds full. For they thought that prayers were fed (as Tertullian's phrase is) and nourished by fasting[f]; "which offers unto God," as he also loves to speak, "the fattest sacrifice."

And as it is an help to prayer, so a means also to make it effectual, when fasting is an act of true humiliation and repentance: which is the cause that we seldom read of fasting but as a concomitant of prayer. Among other places, read Ezra viii. 21, 23, Jonah iii. 5, 8, and Luke v. 33; which seems to be our Saviour's meaning when he tells his disciples that some devils could not be cast out *but by prayer and fasting*[g]. That is, it was a work which required great intention of mind in prayer to God, and a strong faith in him (in which they were defective); unto which fasting helps to raise the mind, by withdrawing it from care of the body; unto which while we deny all manner of support, we are made more sensible of our entire dependence on God alone.

To whom it is most unseemly to sue for mercy, if we ourselves show no mercy unto others: unto which fasting both disposes and enables us; for it makes us sensible of the miseries of poor hungry wretches, and furnishes us with as much to give them as we spare from ourselves: which was one use that good people heretofore made of fasting, as we may gather from those places where alms are joined together with it and with prayer. The story of Cornelius is well known, Acts x. 30, 31; where he relates how an angel appeared to him on a fasting-day, testifying how acceptable the prayers and the alms were which he then offered unto God. With which agrees the history of Tobias, who, when he sent away his son into Media with many good instructions, enlarges most of all upon alms-

[f] ["Jejuniis preces alere."—De Pœnit. cap. 9. p. 127 A.]
[g] Matt. xvii. 20, 21.

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giving[h]; which the angel at his return teaches them both is to be joined with the two forenamed duties: *Prayer is good with fasting, and alms, and righteousness* (that is, other works of mercy): *a little with righteousness is better than much with unrighteousness: it is better to give alms than to lay up gold; for alms doth deliver from death, and shall purge away all sin*[i], &c.

Nor were the heathens utterly unacquainted with this practice of forbearing food themselves that they might be able to help their neighbours. For when the city of Tarentum was in great distress, and in danger to perish, or to be taken by famine, they of Rheginum made a decree that they would fast every tenth day, and send that victuals to the relief of the Tarentines; who being hereby preserved, gratefully commemorated their deliverance by instituting a festival called Fasting[k].

And now who sees not, in conclusion, that fasting is every way a means to obtain favour with God, for the averting of his anger from ourselves, or from the nation where we live? For if humiliation, if repentance and amendment of life, if earnest prayer, if acts of mercy to others, be the way to prevail with God for mercy to ourselves; then fasting, which contributes to all these, must needs be of great efficacy for this purpose. And this, perhaps, may be the reason why we have not found relief when we or others were afflicted, nor have prevailed for the turning away those evils which at any time threatened us; because we did not seek what we desired in this way, but contented ourselves with prayers and some kind of repentance, without such humiliations and chastening of ourselves as our sins and our condition required.

CHAP. XIII.

Of fasting days; particularly Wednesdays and Fridays.

The church of God therefore hath always set some time apart for fasting as well as prayer; and thought it a duty of such continual use, that it is not safe it should be long inter-

[h] Tob. iv. 7–11. [i] xii. 8, 9. [k] Ælian. Var. Hist. lib. v. cap. 20.

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mitted. For mankind being subject frequently to run into sin, it is but reason they should be frequently put in mind of calling themselves to an account, and returning to him with sorrowful humiliations for their faults. And therefore it is a most ancient and no less wholesome ordinance of the church, that we should, from week to week, assemble ourselves for this end, to search and try our ways, and with fasting and prayers to turn unto the Lord, that thereby we may turn away his wrath from us, which otherways, either in general or particular, may fall upon us.

To except against this because there is no divine commandment upon record for it, is very unreasonable. For in the ancient religion of the Jews there was no precept given by their lawgiver for more fasts than one throughout the whole year, (which was that I named before on the great day of expiation,) and yet notwithstanding they held themselves obliged to observe many other fasts upon set days in several months, some of which are remembered in Scripture, and approved by God, though not prescribed by his particular commandment. Read Zach. vii. 3, 5. viii. 19, where you will find that four fasts in several months having been upon good reason ordained, they durst not alter them (though the reason seemed to be altered,) without a Divine direction; which their elders, by whose authority they were first appointed, desired to receive from the prophet.

But it is most to my purpose to observe, that there were also weekly (as well as those monthly) fasts among that people: which our Saviour found in use when he came, and did not reprove, no more than prayer and paying of tithes, which the Pharisee mentions together therewith in Luke xviii. 11, 12. *The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee that I am not as other men, &c. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.* Which were all commendable things, if his vanity had not made him glory in them, and despise other people: and therefore the Pharisees' frequent fasting is mentioned (I observed before) in other places of the gospel, together with that of John's disciples, (who also fasted oft,) without the least reflection upon them for it, as if they were superstitious, or did more than needed. No, our blessed Saviour rather approves of their strictness in

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this; for he saith his disciples should not be behind with them in fasting hereafter, though for the present there was a special reason why they did not practise it.

Of which speech of our Saviour I shall make considerable use presently, when I have noted that the two days on which they fasted every week were the second and the fifth, that is, our Monday and Thursday. Which days, no doubt, were chosen because they had been of old days of prayer; which the devouter sort observed with fasting also, for such reasons as I have already named. If we may give credit to Maimonides, these days were appointed by Moses himself for solemn assemblies, which he knew could not with safety be long discontinued. And therefore, saith he, "Our master Moses appointed Israel to read the law at morning prayer upon the Sabbath day, and upon the second and the fifth, that they might not rest three days from hearing the law[m]." Upon which days even they that dwelt in the villages (as Mr. Thorndike[n] further observes out of him[o]) were bound to assemble in the synagogues, though on the rest of the days in the week they did not tie them to it, no more than they did to fasting on those days, with which the stricter and devouter sort of people observed them, as not only the gospel, but their own writers, inform us.

Now these two days having been thus set apart from ancient time for prayer and fasting, those pious Jews who became Christians could not think of being less religious and devout under the gospel than they had been under the law; and therefore still continued to observe two such days every week, though not the very same. For as instead of the seventh (which was the Jewish Sabbath) they now kept the first day of the week as the principal time for their assemblies; so, instead of the second and the fifth, they chose the fourth and the sixth (which are our Wednesdays and Fridays) for the two other days on which they weekly held solemn assemblies: and for the very same reason, it is likely, for which Moses or the elders chose the other, because they were at the same convenient distance from the Lord's day as Monday and Thursday

[m] [Tephillah Ubircath Cohenim, cap. xii. num. 1.]
[n] [p. 281.] [o] [Megillah, cap. i. num. 6.]

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were from the Jewish Sabbath; and hereby it was provided, that (as Maimonides speaks) no three days passed without the more solemn sort of assemblies.

Certain it is, that there was no church in Epiphanius's time which did not look upon these two days as the stated days for fasting and prayer. Which he avows so confidently against the Arians, that he fears not to ask this question, Τινὶ δὲ οὐ συμπεφώνηται, &c. "who is there that consents not in this, throughout all the climates of the world, that the fourth day and the day before the Sabbath (i. e. the sixth day) are fasts determined or appointed in the church[p]?" Nobody, he knew, durst contradict this challenge, and undertake to show the contrary; which is the more remarkable, because he represents them as set days by a settled decree or ordinance, and that of the apostles. For so it follows, that it was ordained by an apostolical constitution all should fast on those two days.

Which doth not seem to me so unlikely as it doth to some, when I reflect upon those words of our Lord, in answer to those that asked, *Why the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fasted oft, but his did not:* wherein, as he no way condemns what either the one or the other did, (for that which was a virtue in John's disciples could not be a crime in the Pharisees,) so he doth not go about to excuse his disciples from the like obligation; but plainly saith, that though it was not fit for the present, yet when he was gone from them, they also should fast in those days. And I see no cause why we should not think that he means they should fast as oft (about which the question was) as the other did. Which being twice every week, (of which it is very reasonable to understand the *often fasting* both of John's disciples and of the Pharisees,) I cannot but conclude the apostles also, when our Saviour had left the world, observed weekly two such solemn days[q]: and so, by their practice and example, at least, set apart and determined the times forementioned for fasting and prayer. For why should we think of any other two days than those which the church in future times observed everywhere with such

[p] Hæres. lxxv. n. 6. [tom. i. p. 910 B.]

[q] [The earliest authorities who support this view are Epiphanius (Hæres. lxxv. § 6. Expos. Fid. § 22.) and the author of the Apostolical Constitutions (lib. v. cap. 15). See Bingham, book xxi. chap. 3. § 2.]

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uniformity, that they could find no other original of it but the apostolical ordinance? Thus Socrates writes in particular of the church of Alexandria what Epiphanius[r] saith of the church in general, that it was ἔθος ἀρχαῖον, 'an ancient custom' (or a custom from the beginning of our religion there) to meet on the fourth and sixth days of the week for to hear the Scriptures read and expounded by the doctors, and to do all other things belonging to an assembly, excepting the celebration of the Eucharist, (which it seems was omitted there, though not in other places, on those days, as unsuitable to a fast,) and that Origen taught upon those two days a great part of what he left written in that church. Clemens of Alexandria[s] also mentions these days long before him; and I do not see of what other days Cæcilius can be understood, when he objects (in Minutius Felix[t]) to the Christians their *solennia jejunia*, as dangerous tokens of a conspiracy among them. For it is plain by those words that they held solemn assemblies on certain days for fasting as well as prayer; and that they returned often, and great numbers met together, or else they could not have been held dangerous to the government.

These were the famous station days so much spoken of by the ancient Christians; on which they continued longer in the church than ordinary, the Divine offices being prolonged beyond the ordinary time, and thence they had the name of *stations*.

To be short, if this be allowed (which seems to be a probable truth) that the apostles afterward, though not while our Saviour lived, fasted as oft as John's disciples and the Pharisees had done before, which was no less than twice every week; there can be no other days reasonably thought of for this purpose than those which the church in following ages observed. And there is the greater reason to judge this a probable truth, because the apostles observed other pious customs of the Jews; of not eating, for instance, before morning prayer was over, as I before observed. Which may well incline a considering man to think they likewise conformed themselves to this of fasting

[r] L. v. Hist. Eccles. c. 22.

[s] [Οἶδεν αὐτὸς (ὁ γνωστικὸς) καὶ τῆς νηστείας τὰ αἰνίγματα τῶν ἡμερῶν τούτων, τῆς τετράδος καὶ τῆς παρασκευῆς λέγω.—Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. vii. cap. 12. p. 877.]

[t] [Octav. cap. 8.]

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as often in a week as John's disciples and other strict persons had done: which was no less commendable than the usage of fasting till the end of Divine service on the Sabbath days in the morning.

And then I can see no incongruity in it, (but it rather accords with the practice of religious people heretofore,) if we think these to have been the times on which the apostle advises husbands and wives to forbear one another's company, that they might *give themselves to fasting and prayer*[u]: which Peter Martyr is of opinion[x] the apostle meant concerning public fasting and public prayer. And as the widow Anna is said to have served God many years *with fasting and prayers night and day*[y]; which I think ought to be understood of the weekly fasts which religious people then observed: so the same Peter Martyr thinks it reasonable thus to understand the apostle 1 Tim. v. 5, where he speaks of a widow indeed, whose description is, that *she continueth in supplications* (*with fastings*, saith he,) *and prayers night and day*: upon those days (as I take it) which were then observed in the Christian church, answerable to those in the Jewish.

And why should we not think it was upon one of these days that the church met together (as we read Acts xiii. 2, 3.) *and ministered to the Lord, and fasted and prayed?* for the very distresses in which the church was required then as frequent fasting as ever. There is little doubt but the fast here spoken of was upon a solemn day of Divine service: which is sufficiently implied in those words, *as they ministered to the Lord;* and in those that follow, *when they had prayed.* Now on the Sabbath it was utterly unlawful to fast, and they abhorred from it; as the Christians afterward did from fasting on the Lord's day: and therefore I conclude it was upon one of the weekly solemn prayer-days then in use in the Christian church as formerly in the Jewish. For what reason is there to question that when any extraordinary case called for a special fast (as now the separating Barnabas and Saul for a great work did, and as in pressing dangers the bishops of the church appointed extraordinary fasts,) that fast was still held upon those

[u] 1 Cor. vii. 5.
[x] In cap. xx. Judic. p. 172. [fol. Heid. 1609.]
[y] Luke ii. 37.

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very days, which then they commanded to be observed with more than usual strictness?

For thus all fasts appointed among the Jews upon special occasions were in order to fall (as Mr. Thorndike observes in the chapter before named[y]) upon the usual days of fasting, which were every week observed in a lower degree, but upon those extraordinary occasions were observed with greater severity: and therefore it is reasonable to think the Christian fasts of the like kind were kept on the usual days, (either Wednesday or Friday, or rather both,) only with the greater solemnity. However, that place and another in the next chapter[z] are plain evidences of their fasting before ordinations, or setting persons apart for a special ministry; and upon them is justly founded the fasts of the four seasons (called Ember weeks) before orders are given in our church; all solemn and great things being always undertaken by such preparations. Insomuch that St. Hierome, in his *prologus* to St. Matthew's Gospel[a], saith that St. John being desired by the churches to write his Gospel, (against Ebion and Cerinthus, who denied Christ's divine nature,) told them he would do it, *si ecclesia tota publice antea jejunasset*, 'if the whole church would first keep a public fast before he went about it.' Which is affirmed also by Eusebius in his Ecclesiastical History.

To conclude this chapter; all Christians have so generally observed some set times of fasting, (which was wholly rejected only by the Gnostics[b], who condemned all fasting, nay, cursed it as disagreeable to their beastly life,) that those odd people, who (loving to be singular and cross to the customs of the church) would not observe the two usual fasts on Wednesdays and Fridays, yet fasted on other days: as Marcion and his disciples on Saturdays,' and the Aerians on the Lord's day: who also fasted on Wednesday, but of their own accord, not in obedience to the church's constitutions. So Epiphanius informs us, out of whom I have all this[c].

And now that I mention the Saturday fast, it will be fit to take notice, that the church of Rome now hath, and anciently

[y] [§. 20. p. 282.]
[z] Acts xiv. 23.
[a] [tom. vii. col. 5.]
[b] Epiph. Hæres. xxvi. n. 5. [tom. i. p. 87 C.]
[c] Hæres. xlii. n. 3; et Hæres. lxxv. n. 3. [pp. 304 B, 907 C.]

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had, a custom of fasting on that day. But as Epiphanius condemns this as one of Marcion's errors, that τὸ Σάββατον νηστεύει, 'he fasted on the Sabbath,' that is Saturday; so Petavius[d] ingenuously acknowledges (what his great learning could not but know) that this was contrary to the custom of the Eastern church; in which that day was a long time honoured as a festival. And he should have added, that this custom of fasting on Saturday was so far from being universal in the Western church, that it did not, of a long time, prevail in all the churches of Italy. For it is commonly known that in St. Ambrose's days they did not fast at Milan upon that day: which the mother of St. Austin wondering at, when she came thither, had this answer returned to the inquiry her son made of the reason of it, from St. Ambrose: "When I am at Rome, I fast on Saturdays, because they do so there; but when I return to Milan, I do not fast on that day, because they do not so here." An admirable resolution of doubts of this nature; importing that we should conform to the customs of the church where we live, without condemning the customs of other churches. For all were founded at first, it is likely, upon some great reason (peculiar to that church, wherein it differs from others): and if St. Austin's information be right, there was a weighty cause for what they did at Rome: for he saith in his Epistle to Casulanus, the original of the Saturday fast there was, that when St. Peter entered the lists with Simon Magus, upon a Lord's day at Rome, the church appointed a fast the day before, which was observed there ever after. But when one Urbicus contended vehemently for the necessity of this Saturday's fast, as if there were a Divine law for it, St. Austin most resolutely opposed him, and denied any such obligation, as may be seen in his eighty-sixth Epistle[e].

But my intention is not to engage in any controversies, but plainly to instruct our people in their Christian duty; which is to observe the ordinances of the church whereof they are members: which make Wednesdays and Fridays days of solemn supplication, as anciently they were; and all the Fridays in the year, except Christmas day, to be also one of the days of fasting or abstinence.

[d] [Annot. ad Hæres. xlii. inter opp. Epiphan. tom. ii. p. 77.]

[e] [Epist. xxxvi. ed. Ben. cap. 9. tom. ii. col. 76.]

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CHAP. XIV.

Satisfaction to some exceptions.

It is now a shame, or should be so, to mention the stale objections of Mr. Cartwright and others against this doctrine, which have been often baffled[f]: that God in the fourth commandment gave men liberty to work six days, which none can restrain; and that the apostle condemns the churches of Galatia for *observing days, and months, and times, and years*[g]. But since some are still so weak as to insist upon such trivial exceptions, I shall in a few words tell the reader what he is to answer when he meets with them.

To the first it may be replied, that the Jews to whom that precept was given did not understand it to give them such an unbounded liberty, that none could appoint any of the six days

[f] [The first Admonition to Parliament, objecting to ecclesiastical holidays, refers, in the margin, to Exod. xx. 9. So the 'View of Popish Abuses' subjoined to the Admonition argues: "Days .. ascribed unto saints .. and kept holy, are contrary to the commandment of God, *Six days shalt thou labour*," p. 11. "Seeing therefore that the Lord hath left it to all men at liberty, that they might labour, if they think good, six days; I say the church, nor no man, can take away this liberty from them, and drive them to a necessary rest of the body. And if it be lawful to abridge the liberty of the church in this point, and instead of that the Lord saith, Six days thou mayest labour if thou wilt, to say, Thou shalt not labour six days; I do not see why the church may not as well, whereas the Lord saith, Thou shalt rest the seventh day, command that thou shalt not rest the seventh day; for if the church may restrain the liberty that God hath given them, it may take away the yoke also that God hath put upon them."—Cartwright, Reply to Whitgift's Answer to his Admonition to the Parliament, p. 152. (4to. lit. Goth. s. a.): quoted, together with Whitgift's Defence, in that prelate's Works, vol. ii. p. 569. ed. Park. Soc.

The same captious objection was adopted by the eminent Scottish presbyterian divine, David Calderwood, writing under the pseudonym of Didoclavius:—

"Primum argumentum contra observationem festorum petitur e verbis quarti præcepti in Decalogo, *Sex diebus operabis*. Hæc verba continent vel præceptum vel permissionem. Si præceptum operandi sex diebus, ergo nullus potest cessationem ab omni opere imperare: si permissionem, ergo nullus potest hanc libertatem populo eripere, et simpliciter cessationem ab omni opere imperare, vel etiam ob cultum divinum."—Didoclavii Altare Damascenum, pp. 670, 671.]

Hooker reasons powerfully in reply to this cavil of the Puritan party, book v. chap. 71, and note.

Thorndike also has some remarks to the same effect in his treatise on the Service of God at Religious Assemblies, chap. viii. vol. i. p. 270.

[g] Gal. iv. 10.

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to be employed otherwise than in labour. For then Esther did very ill in commanding a three days' fast, when the exigence of their affairs required it. Nay, they who make this exception have no such sense of that commandment, (and therefore they do very ill to mention it,) for they themselves set apart any day, as they please, for prayer and humiliation, or thanksgiving; and when they had power, required others so to do. Which is utterly unlawful, if the fourth commandment have any such meaning as they imagine: which must lead them at last to affirm that labour is commanded on all days but one, directly against their own frequent practice.

As for the other, there is nothing more certain, and more universally acknowledged by all Christians, than that it belongs wholly to the keeping of the Jewish solemnities: to which Christians were so far from having any obligation, that they who thought they had, from an opinion that the Mosaical Law was still in force, did in that overthrow Christianity, and go back to Judaism. This is apparent from the scope of the apostle's discourse, as well as from the account which the ancient writers of Christianity[h] have given us of their sense about it; such as St. Hierome and St. Austin. The former of which, in his comments on this place[i], mentions the fasts and assemblies on certain days among Christians, as wisely appointed for those who spend more time in the world than with God, and either cannot or will not assemble with the church every day: that on those solemn days, at least, they might sequester themselves a while from secular employments, and bestow some time on the service of God.

Their exceptions are far more considerable, who say they cannot fast without great prejudice to their health, or without indisposing them for God's service. But they may be easily and briefly answered: for as to those who say their health is hereby prejudiced, if they be certain of it, the church never intended to oblige them by its laws about fasting: which are designed, as all its ordinances are, for the good, not for the hurt of all its children. But in this let them use an upright judgment, and they need trouble themselves no further: only let them consider, it will not prejudice their health to come to the prayers on Wednesdays and Fridays (and therefore I hope

[h] Vid. Socratis Histor. lib. v. c. 22.

[i] [tom. vii. col. 457.]

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they will make a conscience of that); and to use some abstinence also on those days will, in all likelihood, contribute much unto their health.

As for the other, they may be soon satisfied also, that if fasting do not promote the religious ends for which it was ordained, it must be let alone. And one great end is prayer, as hath been said: for which if it make men unfit, by raising vapours and clouds, they must take some moderate refreshment. But this supposes still that they will frequent the prayers; of which let them be careful, and beg of God to accept of such humiliations as they are able to make before him.

Some pretend that other reformed churches have no set days of fasting, (but only fast as occasion requires,) nay, some of their divines have spoken against such days.

To which it may be replied, that Luther, the very first reformer, acknowledges two kinds of fasts to be laudable, (in a sermon of his on the Sunday next to Christmas day,) one a civil fast appointed by the magistrate at certain times, which is a profitable and necessary ordinance, that all things be not consumed by luxury and riot: the other spiritual, to be observed by all Christians. And it would be very well, *si aliquot diebus ante festum Paschatis et Pentecostis, et Nativitatis Domini communiter servaremus, &c.;* 'if we did all keep some such days before the feast of Easter and Whitsuntide, and the Nativity of our Lord;' with this caution only, that we do not think we merit any thing of God by our fastings.

Melancthon's sense is so commonly known, that I shall not set down his words[k], (which may be found in Mr. Thorndike[l],) for not only Cassander, but Pererius also (in his comment upon Romans xiv.) acknowledge his opinion to be, "that fasting and the observation of things indifferent may be profitable, and conduce to God's worship; not immediately indeed, but mediately; for by fasting a man is made more fit to pour out prayers, in which consists the worship of God."

Peter Martyr also resolves the question, Whether men be bound to obey when princes, or the church, appoints fasts, in these peremptory words: *Astringuntur sane lege fidei atque*

[k] [Apolog. Confess. August. Opp. tom. i. fol. 97.]
[l] Relig. Assem. p. 286. [p. 291. 8vo. Oxon. 1844.]

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obedientia[m]: "they are bound certainly, both by the law of faith and by obedience. For when fasts are propounded consonant to God's word, how can he who believes in God decline them? He cannot. Only it is to be understood, that they are bound who are able. For if anybody be disabled by his age, by sickness, or by labours, in these cases that which the holy Scriptures say must take place, *I will have mercy, not sacrifice.*" Which is an excellent resolution for those scruples I mentioned before to govern themselves by; who being really infirm are no more under this law (while they continue so) than little children, women with child, and aged persons, who need frequent refreshment.

And thus whole churches have resolved; as Cassander[n] acknowledges out of the confession of Saxony, in which they declared their willingness "to observe the set fasts, and other such like traditions, provided no opinion of merit were placed in such observances, &c.[o]" And the Bohemian confession expressly consents, that "such rites and ceremonies ought to be retained, which do advantage faith, the worship of God, peace and order: whosoever they had for their author, whether synod, pope, bishop, or any other[p]."

And if any particular doctor hath decried such things, it hath been in opposition to the superstitious observance of them, the opinion of merit, satisfaction, and such like conceits, with which too many minds were infected. And so the divines of the Roman church have not been sparing of such kind of censures. Pererius in particular, a learned Jesuit, in his comments on the first of Daniel, takes notice of a sort of fasting in these days, which many affect upon a perverse account (as his words are): they either "thinking the sum of Christian perfection to consist in the service of abstinence alone; or thereby hunting after the praise of men, &c.; or having so little prudence that they extend their fastings beyond measure: to the great hinderance, that is, and damage of far better and more profitable things[q]."

[m] In Lib. Judic. c. xx. p. 173. [fol. Heid. 1609.]

[n] [Defens. lib. De officio pii viri, p. 869.]

[o] [Confess. Saxon. art. 20. p. 120. in Corp. et Synt. Confess. 4to. Aurel. Allobr. 1612.]

[p] [Confess. Bohœm. art. 15. ibid. p. 262.]

[q] [Lib. i. p. 38.]

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I will end this part of my discourse with the declaration which Zanchy makes in his own and his brethren's name, to satisfy those who objected to them the laying aside of the fast of Lent. "They cannot justly accuse us," saith he, "that we condemn the *Quadragesima* (i. e. the fast of Lent), which is so ancient in the church, and by the holy fathers received and approved. We do not condemn that Lent fast which the ancient fathers observed without superstition, but".....and so he goes on to show it is only novel, superstitious, and dangerous conceits (of satisfaction, and merit, and the worship of God) unto which it was abused, that they rejected.

Thus he concludes his discourse, which he entitles, *De peculiari quadragesimalis temporis sanctificatione* [p]: which in the beginning also he states after this manner, (that preachers might rightly instruct their people,) "Our judgment is that a difference ought to be made between the first institution of this season, and that which followed after [q]."

[p] Tom. iv. p. 694. in quartum præceptum. [Opp. fol. Heid. 1613.]
[q] [Ibid. p. 697.]

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PART III.

OF THE LENT FAST.

CHAP. XV.

Of the antiquity of the Lent or spring fast.

It is the confession of that learned divine now mentioned [a], that "there is no man, unless he be altogether unskilful in histories, and never saw the ancient fathers, who doth not acknowledge the observation of this time of Lent to be most ancient. For Telesphorus, who was the seventh bishop of the Roman church and martyr (about the year of our Lord 139), makes mention of it, as observed in the church before his time."

And indeed it is so ancient, that there is no beginning to be found of it; which hath moved many to run it up to the very apostolical times; nay, to the apostles themselves. For which there is more reason perhaps than now is commonly acknowledged. For if we consider that the first converts to Christianity were from among the pious Jews, by whom it was propagated to the rest of the world, (which is so clear in the holy story that it cannot be denied,) and that those devout people had been accustomed by the discipline of John Baptist, who came to prepare men for Christ, to fast often, (that is, twice a week, it is most likely upon the days of their more solemn assemblies, according to the ancient practice of the stricter sort of that nation,) we may very well suppose, as hath been already said, that when they became Christians they did not become less devout: but still continued, only upon other days, to keep such solemn times of prayer with fasting every week.

And why we should exempt the apostles, when they were in any settled place, out of the number of those whose practice

[a] Tom. iv. in quartum præceptum. [p. 695.]

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this was, I cannot imagine; but rather think they were exemplary to others herein, being *in fastings often* (as I noted above), and by this *approving themselves the ministers of God*; who did not pamper their bodies, but bring them under, that their minds might be more fit for meditation and prayer, and the illuminations of the Holy Ghost.

Which being as likely as any thing that is not expressly recorded, it is no less likely that when those usual days of fasting came, in the course of the year, to be the very days on which our Lord was betrayed and suffered; the apostles themselves observed them, together with the day on which he lay in his grave, (if not all that week, before the memory of his resurrection from the dead,) with a more than ordinary solemnity, both for fasting and prayer.

And this might be the meaning of those who at first said, that the Lent fast (meaning the solemn fast before Easter) was of apostolical institution; because founded upon their practice and example. Among whom I have reason to reckon St. Austin, who expressly saith in his disputation against Urbicus[b], before mentioned, that though he found precepts for fasting, yet on what days men should not fast, and on what they ought, he did not find determined by any precept of Christ or his apostles: and therefore where he saith this fast was ordained by them, he can mean by their example only. Which Bellarmin himself saw to be so apparent, that he acknowledges[c], when not only he, but St. Ambrose and St. Hierome say, the Lenten fast was ordained by our Lord, they mean not by his precept, but by his example.

Now this example of the apostles was so prevalent, that there needed not so much as an ecclesiastical constitution for this fast (from whence others derive it), but all for a long time easily followed such great patterns of devotion. I say all, for no church can be found wherein a solemn fast before Easter was not observed; which is a strong argument to prove it derived itself from such a beginning as I have mentioned; for otherwise it cannot be conceived how it should prevail universally in all countries where the name of Christ was preached. As it is plain it did, by the eldest records we have of the church:

[b] Epist. 86. ad Casulanum. [See p. 598 above.]
[c] L. ii. de Bonis Oper. c. 14. [tom. iv. col. 1256.]

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which I shall not here set down at large, because it is besides my purpose, and as many as are sufficient I shall have occasion to mention in what follows.

CHAP. XVI.

Of the variety in its observation.

THE reader may take notice that I have hitherto mentioned only a solemn fast before Easter, (which St. Clemens calls τὴν νηστείαν τοῦ Πάσχα[c], 'the Paschal fast'), not yet determining the length of it; but affirming that it was observed more or less from the very beginning. I say more or less, because it cannot be denied that there was great variety in the length of it. For Irenæus, as it is commonly known, writing to Victor bishop of Rome about the difference there was in the time of observing Easter, saith there was also a difference in the observation of the fast before it[d]: "some supposing they ought to fast one day, some two, others more; for some (he saith) extended it to forty: and reckoned their day by the hours of day and night;" that is, fasted from evening to evening. Which words some contend relate only to the fast in the week before Easter; as the first part of them do, but the whole cannot; unless we understand *forty* not of days, but only of hours. Which is against the foregoing words, in which he speaks of days; and against the ancient reading which Ruffinus followed, who translates the words to the same sense that I have done[e]. And his translation is from more ancient Greek copies than any of those which some are pleased now to follow; and is confirmed by Jo. Christophorson and Sir Henry Savil, who read and distinguish the words in the same manner[f].

Which things I have briefly touched, to show that whatsoever variety there was, it is still a confession of a fast before Easter, distinct from all other: in that there was no variety,

[c] [Const. Apost. lib. v. cap. 13. apud Coteler. Patr. Apost. tom. i. p. 318.]

[d] Euseb. L. v. c. 24.

[e] ["Nonnulli etiam quadraginta, ita ut horas diurnas nocturnasque computantes, diem statuunt."—Euseb. H. E. interpr. Ruffin. p. 124. Bas. 1528.]

[f] [On this question in particular, as well as on the general subject of the institution, history, and mode of observance of the Lent fast, the reader is referred to the remarks of Bingham, book xxi. chap. 1.]

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but all observed the fast, as much as they did Easter, that is, the memory of our Lord's resurrection. And Irenæus saith, that this variety did not begin in his age, but, as his words are, "long before us, with our ancestors." So it is evident from thence that the fast was not a new thing, but come down to them from times long before them, that is, from the apostles.

This, if fairly considered, might help to settle all the controversies which are about this fast of Lent: which many have taken a great deal of pains to prove is not an apostolical constitution, nor so ancient as their days: but none of their arguments prove any more than this, that the fast of forty days' length doth not derive itself from their ordinance or example. For they are of no force at all to prove, that the paschal fast, that is, a solemn time for fasting and prayer, and such holy duties before Easter, of more or fewer days, as the devotion of Christians inclined them, doth not proceed from apostolical example. And if this were agreed, it would help to give us a right understanding in all the rest.

For when the fast came to be generally extended to the length of forty days, and so received and observed in the church (which the forenamed Zanchy saith it appeared to him was *non ita multo post apostolorum tempora*[g], 'not very long after the apostles' times') that may be truly thought to be only by an ecclesiastical constitution. And so St. Austin expressly resolves, that those forty days before Easter should be observed, *ecclesiæ consensio roboravit*, 'the consent of the church hath established.' Which being thus settled and confirmed so long ago, I cannot understand why anybody should now go about to overthrow it, but rather employ their pains and learning in showing how it was, and how it ought now to be observed.

In which I cannot but commend the wisdom and piety of the forenamed Zanchius[h], who looks upon these forty days before Easter as *tempus ex pia veteris ecclesiæ ordinatione continuatum, &c.* "a time continued (and extended to this length) by the pious ordinance of the ancient church, in which the faithful are, more diligently than at any other time, excited to repentance, both by fastings, and by prayers, and by hearing God's word, and by other pious exercises; (I suppose he means giving alms more liberally, admonishing one another, and such

[g] [Ubi supra, p. 695.] [h] Ib. in quartum præcept. p. 696.

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like;) whereby they are prepared the more worthily to partake of the holy communion at Easter. And if any one, saith he, thus define the forty days' fast, who is there that can justly dislike it?"

None but those certainly who love to live licentiously, without any bridle, or those whom prejudice makes inconsiderate, and will not let them understand the meaning and intention of the church in this institution. Which was not to tie every one to fast the whole forty days, but to employ themselves all that time in some or other of the forenamed holy exercises, with more than ordinary strictness, and as many of those days as they could bear in fasting.

For as there was variety before, so there was after the fast was determined to forty days; in which some fasted more, some fewer days, as may be clearly proved. For if Dionysius of Alexandria[h] say true (about the year 255) of the six days before Easter, (which was the severest part of the fast; and St. Basil in his time calls the five days of fasting, desiring his auditors to keep πενθήμερας σπονδὰς, 'a five days' truce' with their mouth[i],) that all did not fast ἴσως καὶ ὁμοίως, 'equally and alike;' but some continued to fast all the six days, others only fasted two days, others three, others four, and some none at all: then we may well suppose the rest of the forty days before going were not kept by all with the like strictness; but some fasted more days, some fewer, and some were not able to bear any fast at all.

But besides this inference, which may be drawn from his words, we have extreme testimony that they were observed variously, as men could bear. For St. Chrysostom[k], I observe, in a sermon of his in the third week in Lent, saith that it was a general custom among his people to ask one another in Lent time how many weeks every one had fasted: and that one might hear them answering, that some had fasted two, others three, others all the weeks. Which difference he doth not censure, but only tells them that none of them had fasted to purpose, if they had not abstained from evil speaking and backbiting, and were not cured of their wicked habit of swearing

[h] [Ad Basilid.] Biblioth. Patrum, tom. i. p. 308. [fol. Par. 1624.]

[i] Orat. i. de Jejunio. [§ 7. tom. ii. p. 6 D.]

[k] Hom. xvi. ad Pop. Antiochen. [§ 6. tom. ii. p. 168 E.]

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and such like sins. And Petitus hath evidently proved that in St. Austin's time, and Leo the Great's, they fasted but three days in a week at Rome, during the Lent season. And so Socrates represents their practice at Rome in his time (which was near that of Leo's) that they fasted three continued weeks before Easter, except upon the Saturdays and Lord's days. And St. Ambrose[1] saith in one of his sermons, that he heard *complures* 'very many' of the faithful fasted interchangeably one week in Lent, and dined in another. For which indeed he reproves them; but it was a thing practised, or something like it, in other places, as Sozomen tells us[m]: for having said how some countries made Lent to consist of six weeks of days, others of seven; he saith, some fasted three of these six or seven weeks alternately, or 'scatteredly,' as his word is, (sometimes forbearing all food, and sometimes using it,) and others continuedly fasted the three weeks immediately preceding Easter, without any interruption.

Which variety, I suppose, arose from the various tempers, dispositions, employments, and perhaps devotion, of divers people; who not condemning nor censuring one another, preserved still an uniformity in this variety: all being more than ordinarily diligent in some or other of the solemn religious exercises of this season during the whole time. And thus Irenæus saith that in the variety that was in this fast long before his time, there was a perfect agreement among Christians: "the difference of the fast not dissolving the union of faith[n]." No, nor the bond of peace: for he saith expressly they all lived peaceably one with another, as they did also in his days. Nay, St. Austin makes this diversity in ecclesiastical customs to be represented by the *divers colours* wherewith the raiment of the king's daughter (Psalm xlv.) was embroidered.

"This variety," saith he[o], "consists well enough with one faith, which is the inward glory of the church: for it is only in the garment, that is, in external observations; nay, the garment is thus varied by divers celebrations, so that it is not torn by contentions."

[1] Serm. 34. [Serm. xxiii. ed. Ben. tom. ii. append. col. 421 B.]

[m] L. vii. cap. 19.

[n] [Apud Euseb. H. E. v. 24. p. 248; Niceph. H. E. iv. 39.]

[o] Epist. 86. [Epist. xxxvi. ed. Ben. cap. 9. tom. ii. col. 77 B.]

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Which sense of things if we all had ingrafted in our minds, and both studied and heartily loved this blessed temper, we might with singular profit keep this fast of Lent. Which was wisely prolonged by the church to forty days, (and in some places to more, as I might plainly show, were it the business I design,) not to tie every one precisely to fast so many days, but that all might have scope and room enough, in some part or other of this time, if not in the whole, for such holy exercises as these; to call themselves to the strictest account, to examine their consciences narrowly, to humble and afflict themselves for all their sins, and particularly to amerce, as I may call it, and punish themselves by frequent fastings, for their frequent abuses of God's good creatures, to form and settle holy resolutions of thorough amendment, to pray to God with greater ardour, both in private and public, for his pardon and for his Holy Spirit, to meditate upon the wonderful love of God in our Saviour Christ, who will receive penitent sinners unto mercy, and to fit themselves to receive the tokens and pledges of the same with the higher joy and gladness, because with the fuller assurance of his being reconciled to us (being thus disposed) through the death and passion of Christ Jesus.

And here it may be briefly noted, that the paschal fast was thus enlarged, rather than any other time chosen for these holy exercises, because then we remember the bitter agonies and passion of Christ for our sins: which are the most powerful motives to make us hate and forsake them, and the clearest demonstration what the deserts of them were, and how stupendous the loving-kindness of God, which would accept and also find a ransom for us. Which account of it St. Austin, I observe, gives in his famous Epistle to Januarius[p]: "In what part of the year could the observation of it be appointed more congruously, *nisi confinis atque contigua dominicæ passioni*, 'but that which was bordering upon and contiguous unto the passion of our Lord?'"

As for the limitation of this solemn season of humiliation to the number of forty days, therein, I suppose, the church had a respect to Christ's fasting forty days in the dedication of the new covenant, as Moses and Elias had done in the giving and

[p] Epist. 119. [al. epist. lv. ed. Ben. cap. 15. tom. ii. col. 139 B.]

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restoring of the old. Not that they thought themselves bound precisely and absolutely by that example; but looking upon it only as a convenient direction (as a learned writer of our own[q] speaks) in determining the length of this fast; wherein they might also be put in mind of that sore trial and temptation which Christ then endured for our sakes. This being a number likewise famous in Scripture upon many other accounts; for the rain which made the flood continued forty days; and so many days the spies spent in searching out the good land; and Ezekiel, in the type he was ordered to draw of the siege of Jerusalem, lay on his right side, *to bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days*[r]; after which number of days also Jonah threatened Nineveh should be destroyed; and so many our Saviour stayed with his disciples after his resurrection, before he ascended unto heaven. Which might move the church to think of this number rather than any other; but without any opinion that it was strictly bound thereunto, for then the church would have precisely kept to it, which it hath not done. For deducting the Saturdays and Sundays, which were not anciently fasted in the Eastern church, nor in some parts of the Western, no, not at Rome itself, there do not remain forty days. And if only the Sundays be deducted, as now in the Western churches, there will still want of that number of forty days. For those in the *caput*, as they call it, or beginning of the fast, which being put to the rest make up that number, it must be confessed were not observed at the first, but added afterward.

CHAP. XVII.

Of the manner of its observation.

Now in the manner of fasting, it must be acknowledged also there was a variety, as well as in the number of days which they fasted. For in the holy week, as it was called, they that were strict would eat nothing but bread and water and salt, which was called dry diet, and was proper to those six days,

[q] Dr. Field of the Church, L. iii. [cap. 19. vol. i. p. 221.]
[r] Ezekiel iv. 6.

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as we read in Epiphanius[s]. In the rest of the Lent some would eat only fish; others allowed themselves also birds, because of the same nature, they thought, with fish, being made out of the water, as Moses testifies: but others forbore all fish likewise, as well as flesh; which was the custom of the Greeks: yet the famous monks of mount Athos would eat oysters, because they had no blood in them. Some contented themselves with eggs and fruit; others forbore both, and lived upon bread and herbs and roots. And St. Hierome saith there were some who would not so much as eat a bit of bread; which Socrates also testifies. But in this variety they all agreed in one thing, which was, to eat nothing at all until the evening, and then such food only as was least delicate, not confining themselves to any particular thing, but as their bodies would bear.

No man pretended to fast if he eat a dinner, though it were of fish only, or any other less nourishing thing; and though on other fasts they broke them at three o'clock in the afternoon, they did not take that liberty in the Lent fasts, but continued them, as I said, till night: at which time also they did not indulge themselves the best fare of any sort whatsoever, but contented themselves with the meanest, which they used also with much moderation. Socrates indeed saith that some fasted only till the ninth hour (which is our three of the clock), but they were very few, if we will believe all other ancient writers.

In short, they fasted all day, and used abstinence at night.

Out of all the records of the church which speak of this, I shall select only a passage out of St. Austin, which most lively describes the true sort of abstinence, and reproves the false. It is in his books about the manners of the catholic church compared with those of the Manichees[t]; where, speaking of the great abstinence to which the Manichees pretended, he puts this query to them: "If there be a man to be found, as there may, who is so moderate that he doth not eat twice in one day, and at supper with a little bacon hath only a dish of herbs, ointed and seasoned with the same lard, served up to him, sufficient to suppress his hunger; quenching his thirst also, for

[s] Hæres. lxxv. n. 6. "In two of which days, just before Easter, some eat nothing at all." [tom. i. p. 910 C.] [t] Lib. ii. c. 13. [tom. i. col. 726.]

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his health sake, with two or three draughts of diluted wine, and this is his daily diet: on the other side, there is one who tastes no flesh, nor drinks a drop of wine, but hath exquisite and far-fetched foreign fruits of the earth, with mushrooms and such-like things, set before him in variety of dishes, and sprinkled with good store of spice, at three of the clock in the afternoon; and eats also a good supper of the same things at the beginning of night; drinking therewith mead, and cider, and other good liquors (like enough to wine, and excelling it in sweetness), and that not merely to quench thirst, but as much as he list for his pleasure: which of these two, as to eating and drinking, do you judge to be most abstemious? I do not think you so very blind but you see that the latter is a glutton in comparison with the former. And what can be more mad than to say that he who fills his belly even to belching with all manner of pleasant things (save only flesh-meat and wine) hath kept the rule of sanctity; but that the other, who eats only so much of the vilest food (seasoned with a little smoky lard) as will suffice for the refection of his body, with three cups of wine, merely for the support of health, is prepared for certain punishment?"

Thus that great man (whose words I have endeavoured to contract a little) represents, as I take it, the practice of the catholics in their fastings. By which we may make a just judgment of our own in these days; and not deceive ourselves with a dangerous opinion that we have performed this duty, when we have only changed our diet, not forborne our dinners, or, if we have, crammed ourselves with delightful suppers. This is not only against all ancient practice, and the repeated admonitions of the holy fathers, but is still condemned by good men in all churches; particularly by Lindanus[u], an excellent writer in the Roman church in the last age: whose words I shall not translate at large, but only observe, in short, that he sadly bewails the state of the catholic church, "in which the shadow only of fasting is left."

As for those that cannot possibly fast so long, it never was the intention of the church to oblige them; but they were anciently exhorted, as appears by St. Chrysostom (whose dis-

[u] Panopliæ lib. iii. c. 11. [fol. 121.]

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course on this subject I shall produce anon) to take some refreshment: but then it was only to support their spirits from fainting; and they all humbled themselves before God with supplications and prayers, especially upon the most solemn days of prayer; and bewailed those sinners which now did open penance; and beseeched God to give them true repentance; and endeavoured to perfect their own; and gave alms to the poor; and spent more time than ordinary in reading and hearing God's holy word: in which, and such like holy exercises, both one and other passed this time of Lent, satisfying themselves with these spiritual pleasures, while they denied their appetites in bodily delights.

That is, they that could not fast took care, notwithstanding, to perform all those Christian duties which it is the very design and end of fasting to help and promote.

CHAP. XVIII.

The great usefulness thereof.

And now who sees not the reasonableness of this observance, and the great benefit we may receive thereby, if, instead of contending about it (for which, thus understood, I can see no ground), we would all set ourselves to make the best use we can of what the church hath piously ordained, and for many ages profitably practised?

I do not know how it appears to others, but it seems very strange to me, that what the church had strengthened and confirmed by an unanimous consent in St. Austin's time should find any dissenters from it in these days. And yet I fear there are some, I wish they be not many, who scarce observe Good Friday, that is, the day of our Saviour's passion, with any of that strictness which I have mentioned; but eat and drink, and do all other things as upon the rest of the days of the year: a thing never heard of in the church of Christ till these latter days; which, among other scandals, affords matter for the lamentations of the best men and women among us during the Lenten season, especially upon that great and solemn day, when, by common consent, Christians anciently made a conscience of fasting strictly.

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And they who now make no reckoning of it would do well, nay, they are bound in conscience, to consider, if they meet with this little book, what I have therein represented: and I hope they will be convinced that they ought to do a great deal more, if they be able, than fast and pray and humble themselves before God on that day. For if they be persuaded that fasting is a Christian duty, and that there is frequent occasion for it both upon their own account and others', and so become sensible that the weekly fasts were wisely ordained; they will easily see that there is great use also of this yearly fast of Lent, that the defects of their weekly humiliations and devotions may hereby be supplied.

If there were no other reason for it, this might be sufficient to satisfy pious and humble minds; who, being sensible of the slightness of their weekly humiliations and repentance, cannot but be disposed to hearken to the voice of the church, which calls them to fast before festivals; especially to a most solemn fast before the most solemn yearly festival: that, by taking a stricter account of themselves, and perfecting their humiliations and repentance, they may have a right (as Mr. Thorndike speaks) to the blessing which we then celebrate. For which very reason Peter Martyr[x] thinks the annual fast was ordained among the Jews by God himself, "because many sins had been committed by the people in the whole year foregoing; and the ceremonies of the law had not been diligently observed."

And that suggests another reason why this fast of Lent should be diligently observed. For, besides what relates to our private concerns, there may have been some public offence committed by the community, (I mean, by the whole body of the people,) which may justly require the public humiliation of the whole church. We see, for instance, several wholesome laws and constitutions, both in church and state, generally disregarded, or at least not observed. There are certain vices also, in some ages, universally prevail without any check; whereby the people become less sensible of their guilt. There was a time when the holy communion was not administered for several years together in a great many parishes of England.

[x] In cap. xx. L. Judicum, p. 171. [fol. Heid. 1609.]

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It is still, perhaps, not so frequently administered, much less attended, as it ought to be. The public prayers (which are the chief) are not so frequented as the service of God requires. And if nothing of this, or any thing like it, were known to be publicly done or omitted, contrary to our Christian duty, yet it would be very safe for us to suspect there may be much lurking wickedness which is not espied: or, at least, that several sins of ignorance have been committed; and that, by mistake and through weakness, many errors may have been in the public management of affairs both in church and state; the best of men being apt sometimes to do amiss, even when their intentions and designs are right and good. Upon which score, if there were no other reason for it, the fast of Lent is most necessary; that there may be a public humiliation for public errors, if not for public sins.

Besides, every one knows that this anciently was the season for putting such persons to open penance as stood convicted of notorious sins; and for sending up prayers to God, like public ambassadors, (as Tertullian[y] and others speak,) to sue in their behalf for peace and reconciliation; and to beseech God to grant them true repentance, and perfect remission and forgiveness.

And if this godly discipline be not now practised, there is the greater reason for all good Christians to bewail it; and, looking upon this as one public neglect, join together in public repentance. For which there must be some time appointed; and what time so proper as this, which was the time anciently appointed for this now neglected discipline; and the time wherein the whole Christian church, as one man, humbled themselves before God, both high and low, rich and poor, to beg of God a general pardon of all offences with fasting and alms, and with resolution of amendment of life?

Insomuch that they, who always live in a strict and circumspect care to please God in every thing, may find also something to do at this season as well as other men: if it be but in bewailing higher offenders, and putting up fervent prayers for them, which avail much from a righteous man. But if they be so exact and circumspect as they ought, they may find likewise

[y] L. de Pœnit. c. ix. [p. 127 A.]

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that they have not performed the duties of their particular places and relations with such diligence, but there are many defects, many oversights and slips for which they have need to ask a pardon.

But if there were nothing of this that could be supposed, yet there is a benefit which the most perfect Christians may reap from the observance of this Lent season; and that of an inestimable value in their account. Which is, that it will be a time of retirement from the hurry of the world: which is very desirable to all wise and good minds, (that they may enjoy God and themselves without disturbance,) but hard to meet withal, especially in populous cities; unless by common consent men forbear their visits and keep at home, (which is most suitable to a time of fasting,) and decline their wonted meetings during this season, (unless upon their necessary business,) that they may have leisure to be better acquainted with themselves, and with the affairs and enjoyments of another world.

Whence it is that St. Athanasius calls fasting "the life of angels [z]:" not only because, during the time we can live without meat and drink, we imitate their happy life, and are, as he speaks, of their order, and placed in their rank; but because it clarifies the mind, and gives it both ability and leisure to withdraw itself from the company of things here below, and raise its thoughts to the celestial company above.

To which purpose St. Chrysostom, as his manner is, discourses more copiously in a sermon he made at the entrance of the Lent fast[a]. Which season he desires his auditors to prepare themselves to entertain with the same joy that a chaste and modest virgin is brought withal to her bridal chamber. "Let none of you," saith he, "be sad; let no dejection appear in any countenance when he is invited to this fast; but let all be exceeding glad, and glorify God, the great Curator of souls, who hath provided for them this remedy. Whose advent ought to be received with much pleasure, because the ensuing days of fasting are the true holydays and time of rest: wherein is the safety of souls; wherein is peace; wherein is concord

[z] [Νηστεία γὰρ ἀγγέλων βίος ἐστὶ,] lib. de Virgin. p. 1047, &c. [tom. iii. p. 114 C.]

[a] Hom. 1. in Gen. [tom. iv. pp. 1, 2.]

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and happy agreement; wherein, all busy provision for this life being laid aside, there is no noise, no tumult, no running about of cooks, no slaying of oxen and killing of sheep; but these being removed out of the way, there is all quiet, and tranquillity, and charity, and joy, and peace, and gentleness, and innumerable other good things in the stead thereof." In short, he represents this as an heavenly time; "wherein the mind, being made lighter by fasting or abstinence, may the more freely take its flight into its celestial country."

Which he repeats again in another place, after this manner[b]: "The spring time is pleasant to mariners, and no less welcome to those that till the ground; but it is not so delightful to either of them as fasting-days, the spiritual spring of souls, and their safe port and tranquillity, are to those who are desirous to lead a Christian life. For therefore the countryman rejoices at the sight of the spring, because then the earth appears beauteously painted with variety of flowers; and the mariners are then glad also, because the sea is more quiet, and they are in less danger to be tossed by its waves and billows: but therefore fasting is a pleasant spring time unto us, because then, not the tumult of winds and waves, but of thoughts and passions, and fleshly lusts, are appeased and laid; and the garland, not of flowers, but of spiritual graces is then gathered."

Thus I have briefly shown how useful, nay, how necessary this Lent-fast is, by which all sorts of men in the church may reap very great benefits. Of which let experience be witness, by making a serious trial: for where there remain no more than merely the faint remainders of the ancient strictness in this discipline, they produce such considerable effects, that we may easily know thereby what profit might be expected from the complete and faithful observance of it.

Hear what an accomplished gentleman of our own country writes upon this subject: whose words I shall the rather set down, because they notably illustrate the usefulness of this institution.

"At one time of the year," saith he[c], (speaking of a very

[b] De Jejun. et de Geneseos lectione. [Serm. i. inter viii. in Gen. tom. iv. p. 645.]

[c] Sir Edw. Sandys, Europæ Spec. sect. 9. [p. 21 sqq. 8vo. Lond. 1673.]

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loose country,) "namely, in LENT, they are much reformed: no such blaspheming nor dirty speaking as before; their vanities of all sorts laid reasonably aside; their pleasures abandoned; their apparel, their diet, and all things else composed to austerity and state of penitence: they have daily then their preaching, with collections of alms, whereto all men repair; and, to judge of them by the outward show, they seem generally to have very great remorse for their wickedness. Insomuch that I seemed here to have best learned the right use of LENT; in this country first to have discerned the great fruit of it; and the reason for which those Sages at first did institute it.

"Neither can I easily accord to the fancies of such as, because we ought at all times to lead a life worthy of our profession, think it therefore superstitious to have one time wherein to exact or expect it more than other; but rather do thus conceive that, seeing the corruption of times and wickedness of men's nature is now so exorbitant that it is a hard matter to hold the ordinary sort of men within the lists of piety, justice, and sobriety, it is fit therefore there should be one time at the least in the year, and that of reasonable continuance, wherein the season itself, the use of the world, the practice of all men, (for even the Jews and Turks have their Lents, although different,) the commandment of superiors, the provision of fit means to assist them therein; and, in sum, the very outward face and expectation, as it were, of all things should constrain men, how wicked and wretchless soever, for that time at least, to recall themselves to some more severe cogitations and courses."

For which there is very great reason (as he proceeds to show), "lest sin, having no such bridle to check it at any time, should at length wax headstrong, and unconquerable in them; and that, on the other side, being thus necessarily immured for a while, though but to make a bare show of walking in the paths of virtue, they might afterwards more sincerely and willingly persist (as custom makes hard things pleasant), or at leastwise, return more readily again unto them some other time." Thus that excellent person.

Which puts me in mind of a discourse of St. Chrysostom[d]

[d] Hom. ii. in Genes. [tom. iv. p. 8.]

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upon this subject; in which, upon the first day of Lent, he represents how this season prepares the mind to be a fit soil to receive the Divine doctrine, just as a field when the weeds are killed is disposed for the seed. "For fasting," saith he, "is the tranquillity of the soul, &c.; there is no tumult to-day, no noise, no chopping of meat, no running about of cooks; but all these being gone, this city is become like to a grave, sober, and chaste matron or mistress of a family. Upon which when I cast mine eyes, and observe what a sudden change there is in it from what it was yesterday, I am amazed at the force of fasting. Which having made an entrance into every man's conscience, hath transformed the thoughts, and purified the mind, not only of the magistrates but of private persons; not only of the free-born citizens but of servants, both of men and of women, of rich as well as poor; and not only of those who are Greeks, but even of barbarians also. But what do I speak of the magistrates and private persons? Even he who wears the diadem, the crowned head, like all the rest, hath bowed his conscience to his obedience. And to-day there is no difference between the table of the rich and of the poor; but every where a spare diet, free from luxury and vanity. And every one comes to-day with more pleasure to a slender table, than yesterday he came to one furnished with all delicacies, where the most generous wines also were not wanting. You see, my beloved, from the very proœm what the power of fasting is."

Whereby he hoped they would be cured of all their diseases, and that it would prove as good physic to their souls as it is in many cases to the body. "For by fasting," saith he in a following sermon[e], "I mean abstinence from all sin, which is the end of abstinence from food. Therefore we fast from meat and drink, that we may bridle and curb the lusts of the flesh, and make the horse more easily obey his rider. He that fasts ought above all things to refrain from anger; to learn meekness and gentleness; to have a contrite heart; to repel all absurd desires; to have before his eyes continually the eye of the eternal Judge, the tribunal which cannot be corrupted; to be as much better than others as he is richer; to have the

[e] Hom. viii. in Gen. [pp. 62, 3.]

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command of his wealth; to be liberal in giving alms; and to admit not so much as an evil thought against his neighbour. This is the true fast, as Isaiah teaches: and therefore let this be our care, and let us not fancy, as many do, that fasting consists only in eating nothing till the evening. This is not the business; but that, together with abstinence from meat, we abstain from all things that may hurt us, and have more leisure for spiritual employments. A faster ought to be humble, mild, lowly, a contemner of the glory of this life; for as he hath despised the care of his appetite, so it becomes him as little to mind vainglory, and look to him alone that searches the heart and the reins; to make prayers and confessions to God with great diligence, and to do himself good by doing good, and giving alms to others, &c."

Thus let us spend every week, nay every day of this Lent (saith he, in another sermon, going over the same things again in little different language[f]): and then there was reason, he thought, to hope that they might get a habit of these virtues before the conclusion.

And to the same purpose St. Athanasius, in his book of Virginity before mentioned: "It is not simply fasting which we magnify; for if thou fastest, and dost not keep thy mouth that it speak no evil, if thou dost not guard it from venting passionate and angry words, from telling lies, from perjury, from backbiting and slandering thy neighbour; if any of these go out of thy fasting mouth, thy fasting will profit thee nothing; all thy pains in this is but lost labour[g]."

And who can think that if such lessons as these did all the Lent long still sound in men's ears, and were continually pressed on their hearts, they would be without any effect for the reforming of their lives? No, the very face of all things then looking so solemn (as the ingenious gentleman now named observes) would naturally constrain them in some measure to be serious: and that, in all probability, would occasion just reflections upon themselves and their evil courses; which would produce in some or other new resolutions and purposes of amendment.

And if a thorough reformation should be wrought in none,

[f] Hom. xv. in Gen. [pp. 121, 2.]

[g] [§ 7. tom. ii. 114 C.]

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yet this restraint upon men's evil inclinations for such a considerable time would put such a stop to the progress of vice, that it would make men, if not better, yet less wicked than otherwise they would have been. Of which that gentleman was so sensible, that he looks upon it as the special great mercy and grace of God, which hath preserved the severity of Lent in those countries where looseness of life is so great, that, were it not for this, "the floods of ungodliness growing so strong and outrageous, and having nowhere either bounds or banks to restrain them, might plunge whole nations into such a gulf of wickedness as should leave no hope of their recovery."

CHAP. XIX.

A further satisfaction to some objections.

But there are some who imagine there is no need of a set public fast, of such long continuance as the fast of Lent is, for these good purposes; because every man may humble himself before God for his offences, and repent himself of them in private, at such times as he thinks best, or can best spare, to be set apart for such holy uses.

Unto which exception I think sufficient satisfaction hath been given in what was last said, if men would considerately weigh it. But because it is very useful to have a distinct knowledge of things, I shall give a particular answer to it. And to the first part of it I shall return the same answer that our excellent Hooker hath already made: that no doubt penitency is in this like prayer, that it will be acceptable to God, whether performed in public or in secret. Howbeit, as in prayer, if men were left wholly to their own choice of such times as they thought fit, for their voluntary meditations in their closets, and not drawn by law and public orders unto the open assemblies of the church at certain times and hours, it may be easily conjectured what Christian devotion would that way come unto in a short time; even so in this of penitency we are taught by sufficient experience, without any further trial, how little it avails to tell men of washing away their sins by tears of repentance, and so to leave them altogether to them-

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selves. For alas! they little think of this, but pass over their numerous sins without taking any considerable time to bewail them and repent of them; and therefore the church had reason to set a time apart for this discipline; wherein the public example of all may be unto every particular person a most effectual means to put them in mind, and even draw them to that which they all quite and clean forget, as if penitency were no part of a Christian man's duty.

As for the other part of the exception, which is the long continuance of this set time, I gave the reason of it before, that men might shake off the habits of intemperance and impurity, of evil speaking, lying, and such like sins. Unto which having been long accustomed, they cannot presently get rid of them; but by making it their business for so many weeks to refrain them, may possibly quite forsake them, and never return unto them.

And if they that are not able to fast totally from meat and drink would use their utmost endeavour to abstain from those sins to which they find themselves most inclined, and to deny all manner of bad desires, they might without fasting attain the end for which fasting is ordained: which I repeat again for the further satisfaction of those who are troubled, because they are not able to fast all day, at such times as the church appoints.

For whose sake I shall enlarge a little more upon this subject: and, as I have shown before that there are many people that cannot bear the discipline of fasting, (particularly they that are of a weak constitution, and can eat but a little at a time; who therefore require frequent reparations of the decays of nature;) so now I shall add to that number such as out of choice eat always sparingly; no more, as near as they can guess, than will just suffice to support their strength for the discharge of their duties in their several employments. These men leading always such an abstemious life, that it may be called a perpetual abstinence, St. Chrysostom also excuses from the obligation of fasting. Whose discourse I think fit to set down, for the full satisfaction of such kind of scruples.

For the understanding of which the reader must know that his church had been thronged with company from the beginning of Lent till about the ninth or tenth day; when he observing there was but a very thin congregation, he begins his

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sermon in this manner[h]. "What's the matter that your assembly is so small to-day, and we have not such a concourse as hath usually been here? Perhaps some are ashamed after they have been at a carnal table to come to this spiritual, and therefore we have not their company. But let such hearken to what the wise man saith, *There is a shame that bringeth sin, and there is a shame which is glory and grace*[i]. No man hath reason to blush if he come from his corporal repast to partake of the spiritual. A sober hearer, though he have dined, is not unfit for this assembly; as on the contrary, a listless and careless, though he remain fasting, gets no good thereby. I do not speak this to unloose you from the strictness of fasting, (God forbid,) for I much approve and praise those who are fasting: but I would have you to understand that you should come after a sober manner, and not merely out of custom, unto spiritual things: and that it is not eating, but negligence, disorderly passions and affections, and lusts uncurbed, that make men unfit for our sermons. For, beloved, if by reason of the weakness of thy body thou canst not continue all the day fasting, no wise man will reprove thee for it. For we serve a gentle and merciful Lord, who exacts nothing of us beyond our strength; nor doth he simply require fasting and abstinence of us, and that we should remain fasting till this hour; but that, throwing away all cares for the things of this life, we should bestow all our leisure in spiritual employments. And if we order our life with a sober mind, and whatsoever leisure we have be employed in spiritual things, and we eat merely for necessity, and so much as needs and no more, bestowing all our life in some good work or other; there is no need then that we are in of that help which is received from fasting: which was not ordained for such kind of men, but because human nature is negligent, and delights in pleasure, and seeks for ease and liberty. Therefore our most merciful Lord, like a tender-hearted father, devised this medicine of fasting: that delicacies and making much of ourselves might be cut off, and we might translate our thoughts about the things of this life unto spiritual employments.

"If therefore there be any here present whom the infirmity

[h] Hom. x. in Genesin. [tom. iv. p. 71.] [i] Ecclus. iv. 21.

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of their body will not permit to continue fasting without their dinner, I exhort such both to refresh their bodily infirmity, and not to deprive themselves of this spiritual instruction: but (having taken their bodily repast) to be so much the more studious of it. *Εἰσὶ γὰρ, εἰσὶν ὁδοὶ*, &c. for there are certainly, there are ways, by which far wider doors of confidence towards God may be opened, than by mere abstinence from food. He therefore that takes some food, being unable to fast, let him give larger alms; let him send up more fervent prayers; let him be more forward, and show greater alacrity in hearing God's word. In those things his bodily infirmity can be no hinderance to him. Let him be reconciled to his enemies; let him drive all remembrance of injuries out of his heart: and if he hath done these things, he hath kept the true fast which the Lord requires of us. For he commands us to abstain from meat for these things' sake, that we should check the wantonness of the flesh, and make it obedient and tractable to fulfil his commandments.

"Wherefore knowing these things, I beseech you who can fast, that you intend and increase, as much as is possible, this your good and laudable forwardness: for the more the outward man decays, the more your inward man is renewed. Fasting brings under the body, and bridles its disorderly motions: it makes the soul also more clear and bright, giving it wings also and making it light and ready to soar aloft. As for our brethren who cannot fast, do you exhort them that they would not for this cause refrain from their spiritual food: tell them what I now say, and let them know that not he who eats and drinks moderately is unworthy of this auditory, but he that is lazy and dissolute. And tell them also what the apostle saith in that oracle of his; that both *he that eateth, eateth to the Lord; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.* In like manner, let him that fasteth give thanks to God, who gives him strength able to support the labour of fasting: and he that fasteth not, let him also give thanks that nothing of this nature can do him hurt, nor hinder him from minding the salvation of his soul, if he be pleased to attend it. For it cannot be told how many ways our most merciful God hath provided, by which, if we will, we may attain the highest confidence in him.

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"These things I have said for the sake of the absent, that occasion of shame might be taken from them, and they might know there is no reason to be ashamed on this score. For to have eaten doth not bring confusion upon us, but to have done an ill thing. Sin is a great shame, which if we have admitted, we ought not only to blush, but to hide ourselves for shame, and, like condemned persons, bewail ourselves as miserable wretches; and yet not then to despond, but to make the more haste to penitence and pardon. For he is such a gracious Lord that he requires no more when by negligence we fall into sin, but that we acknowledge our errors, and proceed no further, nor return again to the same offences."

I omit the rest, for he repeats the same thing often over in that sermon. In the conclusion of which, after he had expounded a portion of holy Scripture, he excuses himself for holding them so long; which yet, he tells them, was not without reason, but that they who were present might be able to teach those who were absent the forenamed lesson, which he desires them to carry home with them, and instruct their absent neighbours in it. And the next day but one he begins his sermon with the very same lesson again, having also in his sermon, upon the day between these two, told them that two days in a week were allowed unto all wherein to intermit their fasting[k]. Which he compares to the resting-places and inns which are upon the road, that weary travellers may turn in and refresh themselves a while, to enable them to go on their journey the more cheerfully, and to the ports and havens on the sea-shore, into which the mariners may run their vessel when they have been tossed with the waves, and there wait for the opportunity of a fair wind to carry them forward. Such shores and havens, saith he, such rests and stays hath God granted us, for two days in the week, in this course of the Lent fast, that the labour of it being a little remitted, and they that travel in it refreshed, may afterwards go on with the greater alacrity.

Of the same opinion was his great friend St. Basil, in his book of true Virginity[l], where he saith, "We may apply to fasting those words of the holy Scripture, *Turn not to the*

[k] Hom. xi. [p. 82.] [l] Tom. i. p. 717. [§ 11. tom. iii. append. p. 598 D.]

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right hand nor to the left. For as it is dangerous to incline to gluttony, so by too much abstinence to weaken the body, and make it unserviceable, is altogether as absurd, and most irrational. For abstinence from the pleasures of the belly is not good in itself, but only as it contributes to the attainment of virtue. Now if we regard not that, by an immoderate abstinence, for which we choose to abstain from meat, we pervert the end of its institution, and by our folly make it produce the quite contrary effect to what was designed in it. For the organ being broken and spoiled, our souls cannot converse with God by reading and by prayers; nor can it comply with our desires when we have a mind to do any good office to our brethren. We ought therefore to have a due care of the body; not for the body's sake, but for the sake of its ministry and service in the acquisition of virtue. For it is impossible either to attend to reading, or bend our mind to prayer, or indeed to be fit for any other profitable employment, if the body be not well treated, that it may be an obedient minister to us. And therefore the apostle saith he *brought under his body*, but it was that it might be his servant."

I might add the words of another great man, Gregory Nazianzen[m], who, showing that we are ill advised if we think to imitate all Christ's actions, instances among other things in his fasting. "Christ," saith he, "fasted before he was tempted; we before Easter: the fasts are the same, but there is not a small difference in their times. For he fasted to arm himself against the assaults of temptations; we to testify our being dead with Christ, and for a *κάθαρσις προεόρτιος*, 'preparatory purgation before the feast.' And he fasted forty days, for he was God; but we proportion it to our strength: although there be some whose zeal persuades them to extend their fasting above their strength." And in another place[n] he asks this question, *Τί δεῖ νηστεύειν σωματικῶς, τοὺς λόγῳ καθαιρομένους*; 'What need they fast corporally, whose minds are purified by the word?' Alluding, as Elias Cretensis[o] thinks, to that passage of our Saviour's, *Now ye are clean, through the word which I have*

[m] Orat. xl. p. 659. [§ 30. tom. i. ed. Ben. p. 715 B.]

[n] Orat. 36. p. 583. [Orat. xxx. ed. Ben. § 10. tom. i. p. 546 B.]

[o] [Tom. ii. append. p. 964 C. ed. Morell. fol. Par. 1620.]

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spoken to you [p]. For such pure souls, saith he, do not stand in need of that lustration which is made by fasting. In the Latin church St. Austin discourses admirably on this subject in his book of the Manners of the Catholic Church [q]: where he relates what incredible fasts were kept in some monasteries, both by men and by women; yet so that nobody was urged to such severities as they could not bear. Nothing was imposed upon them that refused, nor were they therefore condemned by the rest because they were unable, they said, to imitate what they did. For they remembered with what pains the Scripture commands charity to us all; and were not unmindful of the words of St. Paul in the 14th to the Romans, which I mentioned before out of St. Chrysostom. And, in fine, he saith, that when they were not well, they eat those things without scruple from which they abstained when they were in health. Nay, to such as were weakly, and indeed to all who could not (for instance) have a good health without the use of wine, (from which many abstained,) they caused it to be given them with great humanity and modesty. And some, who foolishly refused what was offered, they brotherly admonished, *ne vana superstitione debiliores citius, quam sanctiores fiant*, 'lest by vain superstition they sooner made themselves more unhealthy than more holy.' They read also to them the command of the apostle to Timothy, that he should drink a little wine, *because of his often infirmities*. And in this manner they exercised piety diligently, but bodily exercise (as the same apostle speaks) they knew was pertinent *ad exiguum tempus*, 'for a little time.'

But I need not take any further pains in this matter: for if we had none of these authorities to rely upon, we might be instructed by common reason, that we ought to break the fast before the appointed time of the day, if we find ourselves thereby indisposed and unfit for the necessary duties which are to be performed on that day. This Erasmus [r] tells us was the resolution of a Franciscan of his acquaintance, (one of the best men that he ever knew,) who, when his companion thought they must begin all their prayers again, because he had seen

[p] John xv. 3. [q] Cap. xxxiii. [tom. i. col. 711, 2.] [r] L. xv. Epist. 14. [al. Epist. ccccxxxv. Jodoco Jonæ, tom. iii. col. 454 A.]

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him eat before the time, said, No such matter; there is no fault committed, but rather God is a gainer by what I have done: for "before, our prayers were languid, flat, and dull; but now we can sing the hymns with a cheerful mind; and with such sacrifices God is pleased." Erasmus himself also on a fasting day having been hard at study, which made it necessary, he thought, to comfort his stomach before dining time with a mess of broth, advised with the same Franciscan about it: who answered, so that the lay brother might take notice of it, "Thou hast not offended; nay, thou hadst done ill, if thou hadst not taken that refreshment, but for little food's sake hadst omitted thy sacred studies, and thereby done injury also to thy spare body."

I end this with the observation of the same great person in another place; that there are certain sorts of food which so nourish the body, *ut vivat, non ut lasciviat*[s], as 'merely to preserve life, not to make it wanton.' And such kind of food if we choose, when necessity requires, merely for support, not for pleasure, it cannot be thought that God or any wise and good man will condemn us for it, when we are thereby only made more serviceable both to God and man.

CHAP. XX.

The conclusion of the whole.

And now, having shown what great benefits we may all receive by this pious discipline, what remains but that I press a little the practice thereof: which thus explained and underderstood, as hath been said, I cannot see what anybody, who hath a sense of religion, can object against it; nor why it should not be universally embraced by such persons, and gladly revived, after too long a disuse of so profitable an institution.

The foundations of which, if they were not laid originally by the apostles themselves, yet they that began it had great

[s] Lib. xxxi. Epist. 43. [Al. de Esu Carnium, ad Christophorum Basilium, tom. ix. col. 1023.]

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reason to think it was so agreeable to their mind, that they would have thus enacted if they had been then alive. For as Philo somewhere saith[t], that the laws of Moses were nothing but the monuments of the lives of the holy patriarchs, who, following the guidance of sincere understanding, without the prescription of laws, religiously observed all those commandments which were afterwards established by legal sanctions: so we may truly say, on the other side, that the polity and conversation of the primitive church was a certain monument and representation of the evangelical discipline, and an uncorrupted rule of life. For though there were at the first some tares scattered by the enemy, which grew up among the good corn, yet it cannot be denied that there was never greater sanctity, nor more perfect innocence, than was among the generality of the faithful: who, as far as we can find, always observed some such solemn fast as I have treated of, before the memory of Christ's resurrection.

And therefore let not us now in these days refuse, much less reject, the service of that, which they found very helpful to them for the preserving and perfecting of the church in purity and holiness: and which good men in later times have been so far from thinking superfluous, that they have rather inclined to like the custom of the Greek church, who, beside the great Lent, have other three Lents (of shorter continuance, and less strict observance) at other solemn times of the year. Let us not lay aside the use of fasting; the example of which flowed from the prophets, John Baptist, our Lord Christ, and his apostles: nor of this great fast, which is commended to us by most ancient custom, (if not by greater authority,) by the doctrine of the fathers of the church in the best ages, and by the practice of all the faithful; and, which is of very great moment, to dispose the mind for the reading and hearing of God's holy word, for prayer, for hymns, and all other Christian duties; whereby we may also draw upon ourselves and our families, nay, and upon the church and kingdom whereof we are members, all manner of blessings; both by appeasing his divine dis-

[t] [Ὡς δεόντως ἄν τινα φᾶναι, τοὺς τιθέντας νόμους μηδὲν ἄλλ' ἢ ὑπομνήματα εἶναι βίου τῶν παλαίων, ἀρχαιολογοῦντας ἔργα καὶ λόγους οἷς ἐχρήσαντο.—Philo, de Abrahamo, tom. ii. p. 2.]

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pleasure, and averting public judgments, and, on the contrary, procuring great prosperity.

What if one part of Lent be now neglected, that is, the public discipline of the church against notorious offenders is not in these later ages exercised? shall all the rest therefore be laid aside with it? A serious believer, who hath any love to himself and the public safety, would rather conclude that there is so much the greater reason to be more diligent in that part of it, from the practice of which nothing but our own wills can hinder us: since notorious offenders, it seems, are grown so numerous, that it is impossible to bring them to do open penance for their scandalous sins and wickedness.

That is, every man who hath as yet a sense of God and goodness remaining in him ought to look upon the ensuing Lent as a time set apart for the calling himself to a strict and severe account: and accordingly, if any man find that he hath been a fornicator, though never so close and secret, a drunkard or constant tippler, an extortioner, an hard-hearted worldling, a calumniator or backbiter, a blasphemer of God, an hinderer or slanderer of his holy word, or any other great sinner; he ought to apply himself conscientiously to fasting and prayer, and giving alms, and all other duties which have been ever accounted proper for this season. And let him not spare himself, but spend his time, as much as he can, in all manner of humiliations, which have been often mentioned in this treatise: retiring himself from company, and from business, to the utmost of his power, that he may lament his sins, and acknowledge his wretchedness, and most earnestly sue to be reconciled to God, whom he hath offended.

Lamentations indeed, and wailings, and such like things are not the whole business of repentance; yet I have demonstrated they are a part of it. And let me now add, they are such a part, (though but small in comparison,) that they alone may obtain great blessings from God upon us. If well-disposed people would, in every parish of this nation, leave off their business upon the first day of Lent, that they might go to church in a mournful habit, with fasting, and tears, and dejection of face, and prostrations, and all other such acknowledgments of their wretchedness, imploring the Divine mercy, it might prolong our tranquillity; and prevail for an adjourn-

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ment, at least, of those judgments, which, if we consider our sinful life, we cannot but think we have justly deserved, and had reason long ago to expect should have been inflicted on us. Especially if we continued all the Lent long to frequent the holy assemblies, (as often as necessary business would permit,) to beseech God in the most mournful manner to take pity upon us: for then this outward part of penitence, with sorrow, and grief, and affliction of spirit, (though no great reformation should follow,) we might be confident would obtain from God those temporal benefits which we call the outward parts of his favour. For so it did in the case of Ahab, concerning whom God saith to the prophet, *Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? Because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days, &c.* The vengeance, though already denounced, was put off till a further day, because he took that revenge upon himself which is mentioned in the foregoing verse; *He rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly*[u].

And therefore what may we not expect from this means, when it is but the outward part of repentance, and the best part is not wanting; but we truly humble ourselves in the sight of God, so as to submit ourselves unto him, to do whatsoever he would have us; faithfully resolving to become new men, and endeavouring so to be? Or, as our church excellently exhorts us on the first day of Lent, "If we would, remembering the dreadful judgments hanging over our heads, and alway ready to fall upon us, return unto our Lord God with all contrition and meekness of heart; bewailing and lamenting our sinful life, acknowledging and confessing our offences, and seeking to bring forth worthy fruits of penance[x]:" then our afflicting ourselves, our mourning, our weeping, our heaviness, and all the bodily exercises before named, would profit not a little; but be so acceptable unto God, that he would give us the greatest blessings, even "perfect remission and forgiveness," as we pray in the Collect for this season. When these bodily exercises are the effects of true contrition of spirit, and when they are earnests of a new life, and a means we use to accustom ourselves to sobriety, to self-denial, to retirement, to shake

[u] 1 Kings xxi. 27, 28, 29. [x] [Commination Service.]

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off bad company, to devotion, to self-examination, to meditation, to pity and commiseration of the wants of others, to charity and works of mercy; then will *the Lord have mercy upon us*, as the prophet speaks, *and he will multiply to pardon*[y].

But let all those especially who truly fear God among us apply themselves with all seriousness to this much-neglected duty: for others, I doubt, unless they be forced to it, will not regard these admonitions. Let it not content them that they do not follow the bad in their ungodly practices; but let them also lament the scandal which they give, and bewail the deplorable estate of such wretched souls, and deprecate the Divine displeasure, beseeching him to turn his anger from us, and to spare us for the sake of those pious souls that, with fasting, mourning, and weeping, humbly supplicate his mercy. If the church did now exercise that ancient discipline so much spoken of, it would be the duty of the very best among us to be present at the censures passed upon notorious offenders, and (I showed out of St. Paul) to bewail them and lament over them in the most doleful manner. And why should we not do that voluntarily in our private retirements on fasting days, which the church doth not call for to be done in public? Nay, we should the rather do it, as I have often said, and bewail this, among other things, that men are impatient of such discipline, or any thing like it; that they will not submit to the government of their spiritual pastors (which is so great a sin that it is next to rebellion against their sovereign); and that offenders are so multiplied as beyond all measure to exceed the number of the good, who are not able to curb and restrain them. This is a lamentable state of things, and ought to affect the hearts of those who fear God with grief and sorrow; especially when they consider the obstinate hardness of men's hearts in these evil courses; their great insensibleness either of their sin or danger; and the cause of all this, their gross infidelity. Which it should be part of every good man's business to bewail in secret; beseeching God, all the Lent long, to put a stop to the floods of ungodliness, that they may not like a deluge overwhelm us.

It is not the custom of these parts of the world to mourn in

[y] Isaiah lv. 7.

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sackcloth and ashes; and therefore I have not pressed the very same significations of sorrow, grief, and humiliation which were anciently used in the eastern countries: but something like them, and equivalent to them, if we be not willing to use, it is because we think it a slight matter to offend the Divine Majesty, and are not afraid of his Almighty displeasure. For let us but awaken in our souls a sense of the heinous nature of those sins which we and others have committed against God, and of the danger we have incurred by our undutifulness to him, and we shall not think it unreasonable to submit to some such discipline as this which is here proposed, instead of that which was practised of old in other nations.

Let every one of us lay aside, all this Lent, our fine clothes, and the usual attire of our bodies: for that is still the custom of mourners in all places: and let us retire ourselves as much as is possible, (for so mourners also do,) making no visits, nor willingly receiving any, if nothing but civility oblige us to it.

Let the time be spent in this retirement, in reading and prayer; in examining our consciences and bewailing our offences; in taking a view of the miserable estate of mankind, and imploring the Divine mercy towards them; in laying to heart the sufferings of any of our Christian brethren; and such like spiritual exercises, which we are too apt to neglect in a crowd of business and of company.

Let the consideration of it move us to afflict ourselves with fasting, or, if that cannot be, with a spare diet.

Let the rich especially, and those that live deliciously, deny their appetites, keep a slender table, and punish their excesses with harder fare.

Drink no wine nor strong liquors without necessity; make no feasts, nor accept of invitations to them.

Give alms liberally, and frequent the public prayers; and there let us humble ourselves before God, and blush to lift up our eyes unto heaven.

Yea, let us pray *with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit* (as the apostle enjoins[z]); that is, address ourselves to him in all sorts of holy thoughts and devout affections; and that with great fervour and ardent desires; with tears and

[z] Ephes. vi. 18.

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knocking our breasts, and bended knees (as Theophylact expounds the words), beseeching him "by the mystery of his holy incarnation; by his holy nativity and circumcision; by his baptism, fasting, and temptation; by his agony and bloody sweat; by his cross and passion," &c. graciously to deliver us.

Tremble to think that you have so oft prayed in the Litany that God would "pitifully behold the sorrows of your hearts," when perhaps you had no sorrow at all there; and now, if you have any, let it be testified in all the sorrowful actions that I have named.

And forbear music and dancing, and all such like pleasures.

Let those that have been slothful content themselves with less sleep, that they may have more time for prayer and heavenly thoughts.

They that have been too voluptuous will do well also to lie hard, though not upon the ground.

Finally, let there be a general abstinence from all manner of recreations, unless the preservation of health make them necessary; and then use them privately.

Leave the playhouses quite empty, and make the churches full; go to no public shows nor meetings, but spend the time, when you come from church, in setting all things right at home.

For St. Chrysostom, I remember, having heard that some of his auditors, since his last sermon, had been at an horserace, bewails it, in his next, as the loss of all the pains he had bestowed upon them from the beginning of Lent; and, among other things, tells them it gave great scandal to Jews and to Gentiles, who, seeing those that were at church daily mingle themselves at those meetings with such as came not thither, think, saith he, that all we do is a delusion, and that we are all alike, no better than themselves. A great deal more he saith on this subject in his sixth and seventh sermon upon Genesis[a]; and begins his forty-first sermon with the very same matter[b]. In like manner St. Basil[c] chides those who, as soon as sermon was done, went and played at dice and tables: it being to no purpose to afflict the body with fasting, if the mind continue

[a] [Tom. iv. p. 39 sqq.] [b] [p. 410.]
[c] Hom. viii. in Hexaem. p. 110. [§ 8. tom. i. p. 79 C.]

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vain, and full of vicious affections. And therefore St. Chrysostom frequently beseeches his hearers that when they came home they would spend their time in ruminating upon what they had been taught, and conferring one with another about it; and thereby free themselves from all bad desires, and flee the snares of the devil. "For when the devil," saith he, "sees our minds solicitous about these divine matters, and perpetually conversant in them, he dares not approach us, but flees away before the face of a more powerful Spirit working in us."

Now all this that hath been said doth not come up to the primitive strictness; but it approaches something near unto it, and is a great mortification of sensual nature, which delights in company and merry meetings, in feasts and jollity, in sport and plays, in laughter, and all manner of mirth and pleasure: which we ought to lay aside and deny ourselves at this season, that we may fulfil the apostolical precept: *Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy to heaviness*[d].

Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

Let the reader cast his eyes back to the latter end of the seventh chapter of this book, and, when he hath perused it again, consider with himself what he hath to do; especially in the great week of Lent (as they anciently called the week just before Easter); which had that name given it, saith the great man before mentioned[e], "because in it certain great and unspeakable benefits were bestowed upon us. There was an end put, in this week, to the long-continued war; death was extinguished; the curse was taken away; the tyranny of the devil dissolved, and he himself disarmed; God reconciled to mankind; heaven made enterable; men associated with angels; things distant conjoined; the partition-wall taken down; the inclosure laid open; the God of peace pacified all things both in heaven and in earth. And therefore we call it 'the great week,' because the Lord graciously conferred on us such a multitude of gifts therein: for which reason many both enlarge their fasting, and are remarkable for watchings, and holy pernoctations, and alms; showing by their deeds the honour they

[d] James iv. 9, 10. [e] S. Chrysost. Hom. xxx. in Genes. [p. 294.]

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have for this week. For if our Lord freely bestowed such great benefits upon us therein, how can we think it decent in us not then to make a show of all possible reverence and honour? For even kings themselves declare in what admiration they have those venerable days, by commanding a vacation to all those who manage civil affairs; by shutting up the doors of the courts of judgment, and requiring a cessation of all strife and contention; that men may have nothing to do but to apply themselves to the right performance of spiritual offices, with the greatest quietness and tranquillity. And more than this, they honour these days with another liberality; loosing the bonds of prisoners, and letting them go free, that, as far as human power reaches, they may imitate their Lord: for as he set us at liberty when we were fast tied and bound with the chains of our sins, and gave us the enjoyment also of innumerable good things; so we in like manner ought, the best we can, to be imitators of this loving-kindness of the Lord.

"You see how every one of us should show in all things the reverence and the honour which is becoming those days which were the procurers of so many and such good things. And therefore now, if ever, let me entreat you to expel all worldly thoughts, and to keep the eye of your mind clear and vigilant. Now is the time to fast more strictly, to make more earnest prayers, to be more exact and large in confession of sins; to be diligent in all the actions of piety; to give alms more liberally; to exercise the strictest patience, forbearance, meekness, and all other virtue: that, coming with these accomplishments unto Easter-day, we may partake of the bounty of the Lord."

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A

DISCOURSE CONCERNING PRAYER:

ESPECIALLY OF FREQUENTING

THE DAILY PUBLIC PRAYERS.

IN TWO PARTS.

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IMPRIMATUR.

Jo. Battely

Aug. 21, 1686.

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THE INTRODUCTION.

THE DESIGN OF THIS BOOK.

PRAYER is so considerable a part of a godly life, and so great a means both to work and to preserve and increase all manner of godliness and virtue in us, that the ancient Christians doubted not to call it κεφάλαιον ἀγαθῶν, &c. 'the very top of all good things; the foundation and the root of an useful life; the fountain and the parent of innumerable benefits[a].'

Whence it is that they have left us so many treatises upon this subject, and that we find it so oft repeated in their sermons; which they tell us they did on purpose, that the souls of their people might receive not merely a light tincture of this doctrine, but as St. Chrysostom's[b] phrase is, "be deeply dyed with it." Unto whose pious labours, which good men have imitated in all succeeding ages, if mine be now added in a small book upon the same argument, I hope it will not be found altogether unprofitable; but contribute something to the growth of Christian piety, by stirring up this present generation to the serious practice of this part of it.

Which is commonly distinguished into Secret Prayer, alone by ourselves; Private, with our families; and Public, with the whole congregation of Christian people among whom we live. The last of which was first in my design, when I began to think of writing about this matter: because Common Prayer, which we make all together in one body unto God, is the most necessary and the most prevalent, and yet, alas! the most neglected of all other. But considering that men would be the better disposed to attend upon the public service, if they could be persuaded to accustom their minds unto devout thoughts of God, and affections towards

[a] St. Chrysost. lib. i. περὶ Προσευχῆς [Orat. ii. ed. Ben. tom. ii. p. 783 D.] et lib. v. περὶ ἀκαταλήπτου. [tom. i. p. 488 C.]

[b] [Καθάπερ τινὰ βαφὴν τὴν διδασκαλίαν ὑποδεξάμενοι.] Hom. περὶ Ὁσίου. [tom. i. p. 512 A.]

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him, alone by themselves; I resolved to premise a short discourse concerning prayer in general; with a special respect unto such secret intercourse with the divine Majesty.

As for that which is called Private Prayer in our several families, there needs no particular discourse about it; but it may be sufficiently understood by what I have to say of the other two; especially of Public Prayer: whose place it is to supply, when we cannot have the benefit of it.

Now this duty of secret converse with God, by humble prayer to him, is evidently enjoined in those words of our blessed Saviour, *But thou when thou prayest enter into thy closet, &c.*[c] In which he doth not exclude Public Prayer, but only forbids ostentation in it: and commands us out of love to God, not out of love to popular applause, that we may be truly good, and not merely thought so, to open our hearts to him when nobody sees us but he alone.

That is the thing I intend to evince, that it is the duty of every Christian to retire himself from business and from company, that he may pray to God. In treating of which, I think it will be useful if I distinctly show,

First, the nature of this duty;

Secondly, the necessity of it;

Thirdly, the great benefits we may derive from its serious performance.

[c] Matt. vi. 6.

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A

DISCOURSE CONCERNING PRAYER, &c.

PART I.

CHAP. I.

Of the nature of this duty.

PRAYER, in the strict use of the word, signifies the petitions we make to God, either for the bestowing on us good things, or the averting from us evil. And thus it is distinguished from Praises of his Divine perfections, from whom those benefits we ask are derived: and from Thanksgivings for them when they are conferred on us, according to our desires. Which though they ought to accompany all our prayers, and it is impossible to pray aright without such acknowledgments of God's incomparable perfections, and thankfulness to him for his benefits; yet they are not the things which are strictly and properly meant by prayer. Which is taken sometimes in a stricter sense still, merely for petitioning for good things; and so is distinguished by St. Paul from *supplications*[a]; which are petitions for the averting evil things from us.

In which restrained senses I do not intend to treat of it; but by Prayer understand an address of our soul to God, the Author and Fountain of all good, to request of him those things which we feel we want, and of which we are desirous.

1. It supposes therefore, first, that we are in want. For if we were full, we should long for nothing. We want wisdom, and God's holy Spirit, both the graces and comforts thereof; together with his pardoning and sparing mercy; his gracious protection and safeguard; provision for all the necessities of

[a] 1 Tim. ii. 1.

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our outward man; besides all the needs of others, especially of God's church, and of that church and kingdom in particular whereof we are now immediate members. A supply of all which we would either receive, or have them preserved to us, if we already enjoy these blessings. That is, we either want the things themselves, or their continuance; and therefore we ask them.

2. But further, it necessarily supposes also that we have a sense and feeling of our wants. For if a man be sick or empty, yet if he think himself well, or feel no hunger, he will neither call for his physician nor for food. Though men be in the very jaws of hell; though they lie under the power of the devil, and be *led captive by him at his will;* though their lusts and passions tyrannize and insult over them; though *sin*, as the apostle speaks, *hath the dominion* in their hearts, and they are so governed and ruled by vicious affections and desires, that they are no better than slaves to them; yet if they think this a state of liberty and ease and pleasure, if they have no apprehension of present or future danger, they will never be at the pains so much as to pray heartily for deliverance.

And therefore, if we will pray aright, we must be possessed with as great a sense of our spiritual wants as we have of our bodily, when we are pinched and pressed with them. We must make our souls feel that there is a God, and that he is our chiefest good, and that in conjunction with him consists our felicity, and that it cannot be any way attained but by conformity to him, in obedience to his blessed will. And perceiving how short we are of this, nay, how far perhaps we are from God and goodness, how very negligent we have been in our duty to him; it ought to humble and abase us, to bring us down upon our knees to sue for mercy; and excite in us earnest desires after him, and after righteousness and true holiness, as that alone which can bring us into his favour.

In short, our souls must acquaint us as thoroughly with their state and condition, as our bodies tell us when they are ill, or in pain; or hungry and thirsty; or labouring under any other burden.

3. And then there is supposed a desire to have these wants supplied, as I have already said. Emptiness is troublesome to us when we feel it; and it is impossible we should not long to

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be eased by getting it filled. If we do but fancy we are in need, there is no rest till we find some satisfaction. We must be either satisfied that we do not need it, or we must have what we are satisfied is needful.

And in this consists internal prayer; the desire or longing of the soul to be filled with all the fulness of God; to be satisfied with his likeness; to be reconciled to him; and to be made daily more conformable to his will and pleasure in every thing.

4. Which desires we are strongly inclined, even by nature itself, to express in words, which are the interpreters of our minds, and declare what is in our hearts. For all sensible creatures we see make their moans by audible cries, of several sorts, when their needs are great. And therefore man cannot be the only silent thing; but is formed by God to implore his help, and beg his relief on all occasions, in such words as are apt significations of his inward desires. And that is the last thing observable.

5. Prayer is an expression of our inward desires unto God, the Author and Fountain of all good. For when we are desirous to receive an alms from any person, we always ask it of such as we believe are able, and we hope are willing to bestow it; but never make our applications to those who are as beggarly as ourselves. Now it is God only who is able to supply all our needs, and hath revealed himself to be willing to bestow what we ask of him; nay, hath invited us to come to him, and assured us he will grant our desires: and who alone knows our needs, and can hear the desires of all men; and likewise is the only judge whether that be fit for us which we ask, or there be not something better than our own wishes.

Upon which account saints and angels are not to be invocated. For as we know not whether they hear us; nay, it seems impossible to us that they should be able to hear such great numbers of supplicants as, in several and very distant places, call upon the same saint or angel; so we know not what power they have to help us, nor what they can do for us, if they could hear us; but we know they cannot be in so many places at once, as they have suitors to give them their succour and assistance. And besides they have made no promises to us that they will so much as prefer our petitions to God, or do all

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they can for us: nor are they wise enough to judge what petitions are fit to be preferred, and what not; that is, what is most behoveful for us in all conditions and states of life, and in all the particular passages and circumstances thereof.

It might be added, that all these petitions must be put up in the name and through the mediation of our blessed Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus, who is our only advocate with the Father. But that belongs rather to the manner of addressing our prayers unto God; and therefore I here omit it. And shall only observe, for the further explication of it, that there are several parts of prayer to God: as may be gathered even from that remark at the conclusion of Psalm lxxii, *The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended:* where the foregoing Psalms are all called *prayers;* though some of them be doleful complaints of the sadness of his condition; others of them confessions of sin which had brought him into that doleful estate; others acknowledgments of his entire dependence on God; others magnify his powerful and wise goodness, and render thanks for benefits received, and promise dutiful obedience, as well as petition for pardon and deliverance. By which we learn, that prayer unto God is made up of all these; and that in a sense of his greatness and goodness, of our absolute dependence upon him, and all the benefits we have received from him, we ought to address ourselves to him: confessing how we have offended him, bewailing the miserable estate into which we have thereby brought ourselves, begging his pardon, imploring the grace of his Holy Spirit; and in the sincerity and uprightness of our hearts resolving to be wholly his, and to serve him in newness of life all our days.

And the truth is, every one of these is virtually a petition to him. Whether we heartily acknowledge what he is, or adore him, or praise him, or give him thanks, or confess our unworthiness, or profess our dependence on him, or promise fidelity to him, &c.; they all bespeak his grace and favour towards us, and move him to bestow his mercy upon us.

This is a short explication of the nature of prayer; which will be something better understood by what follows concerning the necessity of it; though when I have said all that I can, I am sensible it will be defective. For prayer is so sublime a thing, that the noblest wits have acknowledged we stand in

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need "of the Father to enlighten, of his first-begotten Word to teach, and of the Spirit to operate in us, (as Origen's words are [b],) that we may be able to think and speak worthily in so great an argument."

CHAP. II.

Of the necessity of prayer.

We shall be the more strongly moved to study this high and excellent duty, and to labour to perform it aright, when we are made sensible it is so indispensable a part of a godly life, that we cannot so much as pretend to the profession of Christianity if we do not practise it. Of which there is this general demonstration, which cannot be gainsaid.

That which is founded in our nature, and to which we are bound by virtue of our being creatures, to that every Christian is indispensably tied: it being the intention of our Lord Christ his coming, not to loosen those obligations we have upon us as men; but to strengthen them, and bind them harder upon us; to heighten all natural duties, and to make us more deeply sensible of the laws that are written in our very being.

Now such an one is this of prayer, which doth not stand upon a mere positive command, as Baptism, and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper do. That is, it is not our duty merely because our Lord by his authority hath made it so; but he hath made it so, because we are made to it (as I may speak) and formed by God to acknowledge him in this manner. For it is as natural a thing to pray, as it is to believe there is a God, and to be persuaded that we were made by him, and not by ourselves.

Hence it is that you shall not find in the whole law of Moses any precept for prayer: of which what reason can we give but this; that it was so sufficiently known to be a duty by the common light of nature that there needed no instruction about it? nor can I observe hitherto any command in the gospel of Christ barely for prayer, but only for the manner of prayer. As in the place first mentioned, *When thou prayest,*

[b] Περὶ εὐχῆς, n. 8. [§ 2. tom. i. p. 200 E.]

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enter into thy closet, and pray to thy Father which is in secret: and in other places, *Watch and pray; Pray continually; Pray with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit; Pray in the Holy Ghost; Pray always and not faint; Pray in the name of the Lord Jesus.* All which suppose the duty of prayer, and only direct how it is to be performed.

For the further clearing of which general observation, let these following particulars be considered:

I. That it is natural to every living sensible creature, to look back to its beginning, and to own its dependence upon that from whence it derives its being. Thus we see the young ones of all sorts of animals open their mouths, and wait, as it were, for provision from the old ones, while they remain weak and tender, running also to them for shelter and protection, while they are unable to defend themselves. Upon which score prayer is as necessary for us, and as natural to us, as it is natural to an infant to cry for its mother's breast, or something else equivalent thereunto that may satisfy its craving desires. Because it is an acknowledgment and owning of God, as the original from whom we come, and as the Author of all good; *in whom we live, and move, and have our being;* and a confession of our own weakness and helpless condition, without his care of us.

The very heathens had this notion in them, that mankind being ἔκγονα Θεοῦ, 'the offspring of God,' brought forth by him into the world, out of the womb of his Almighty goodness, they ought to resort unto him, even as the chicken runs under the wing of the hen by whom it was hatched, or the lamb runs to the teats of her that yeaned it. And this (say they[c]) we do by prayer; which is nothing else but ἄνοδος τῆς ψυχῆς, 'the return of the soul back to God,' from whence it sprung: ἐπιστροφὴ πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν, our 'looking back to him from whom we come;' a reflection upon the fountain of our being, and of all good: στροφὴ εἰς τὸ αἴτιον, 'our turning about to the cause of our being;' a circling, as it were, to that point from whence we took our beginning; that we may be fast knit and united unto God, and never be divided from him.

[c] Proclus l. 2. in Timæum. [p. 68 A. B.]

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1. And therefore (to explain this more particularly) prayer is, first, an high acknowledgment that God is the first cause of all things. We magnify him hereby as the root, the spring, the fountain of whatsoever we or any other creatures are or have. And without prayer, we do as bad as say we owe nothing to any higher being than ourselves.

2. Secondly, we acknowledge also the sovereignty which he therefore hath over us, and over all things, in that we ascribe unto him a power to command them all, and to help, and relieve, and supply both us and them, according to our various necessities.

3. The independency also of his being is herein acknowledged; in that we ask of him alone, as having full and absolute power within himself of giving us help and comfort, without craving it of any else.

4. His liberty and freedom also, in that it wholly resides, we confess, in his will and choice what we shall have, and how much, and when: all as he pleaseth.

5. His all-sufficiency likewise, to enrich us, without impoverishing himself.

6. Together with his infinite greatness and immensity, which is present to all places, and ready to supply the needs of all supplicants.

7. And it is no less an acknowledgment of his omniscience, which can not only give audience to all petitioners every where; but exactly know both their necessities and their sense of them, and the sincerity of their desires; and also what is convenient for him to bestow upon them, and will do them most good.

8. His inexhausted goodness and bounty likewise, which is still ready and willing to pour out itself to us without any emptiness, in the same blessings that he hath bestowed for so many past ages. And

Lastly, his eternity and immutability; in that after so many successions of men in the world, he is still the same unchangeable fulness: unto whom we resort with the same confidence that good men have ever done.

In short, it arises out of a sense of all God's glorious attributes and perfections: which are every one acknowledged in some part of prayer or other, though we should not expressly

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name them. For in confession of sin we acknowledge his unspotted holiness, and that he is *of purer eyes than to behold*, that is, approve, *iniquity*. In deprecation of his anger we confess his justice; in petitioning his pardon we proclaim his clemency; in our request for grace and help we give him the glory of his power; and when we recount his gracious providences over us, we acknowledge his incomparable goodness and bounty. And therefore, unless we will disclaim God, and have nothing to do with him, we must perform this duty of prayer to him. This is the first consideration.

II. To which add further, that it is natural for every thing that is in want, to desire supply from him that hath ability to fill it. Now such is the state of every man in the world: we are at the best weak and feeble, beggarly and indigent beings, pressed with many and great necessities, which we have no power to make up, but only by going unto God.

Whatsoever is from the First Being, wants something that It hath. Every creature therefore is imperfect; and if any of them could be supposed to want nothing, yet it would necessarily want the continuance of its being, which it hath received from its Creator. And therefore it is a true observation of one of the ancient philosophers[d], that all beings pray, πλὴν τοῦ Πρώτου, 'except only the First Being,' which is God; who hath none to pray unto, but hath all of himself.

Prayer is a confession of the true state of our own souls and bodies, as well as of God's most excellent perfections. A declaration that we are poor and needy; that we are crazy and insufficient of ourselves; that we are dependent and holden up by another. So that we quite forget ourselves, if we do not pray to God: we renounce all care about our own greatest concernments, if we take no notice of him on whom our present and future welfare, both here and for ever, entirely depends.

III. As it is natural unto every one in want to ask, so it is natural unto every one that asks, to put himself into a fitting posture and disposition to receive; that he may appear unto

[d] Theodorus apud Proclum, ib. [p. 65 E.]

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him that gives to be a real object of his charity. Now this we do by prayer; which is a natural expression both of our poverty and of our humility (which very much move compassion) and of the sense we have that we are creatures who have nothing of ourselves which we can properly call our own; and therefore are naturally led hereby to think what submission and obedience we ought to pay unto him whose is all that we are and have.

Upon this account, as much as any other, prayer is necessary, that we may be put into a temper of love and gratitude, and obedience unto him who is the donor of all good things; and who expects that we should acknowledge the propriety he hath in all the gifts which his bounty bestows upon us. Which we do by prayer: whereby we are constantly put in mind, in what tenure we hold all the blessings we receive from his hands; which we may not therefore use as we please, but as he allows and directs. And if we do at any time use them otherwise, and thereby give just offence to God, their owner and ours, prayer both naturally calls such offences to mind, and makes us more fearful hereafter to offend.

For no man comes to ask a benefit of another, (as Mr. Hooker, if I forget not, very pertinently observes,) but, if he have given him any offence, he will then unavoidably remember it; and in the very first place cast himself down at his feet, and beg pardon, with a resolution not willingly to offend him again. Which resolution is maintained and supported by the very same thing which constrained us to make it; that is, the constant necessity we are in to ask for new benefits. For all men are naturally afraid to offend those into whose presence they must frequently come to sue for favours. This keeps them in awe, and makes them careful how they behave themselves, that their suits may not be rejected.

We are not fit then to receive, or to enjoy any thing from God, without devout prayer to him. And therefore we ought constantly to perform this duty; because otherwise we take things by stealth, and lay hold on the blessings of Heaven without asking him leave; and we ought to perform it seriously, because it will not otherwise have the forementioned effect, of making us afraid to offend him, without which our prayers are nothing worth, and can obtain nothing from him.

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To end this let us consider that we do not pray that we may alter the mind of God; who is always the same, unchangeable goodness, ready to give unto those who are qualified to receive his favours; but that we may alter and change our own mind for the better, and thereby become disposed for the good things of which we are desirous. And nothing alters us so much as serious prayer, which puts a new mind into us, and for the present makes us quite another sort of creatures.

We are forgetful of God; lovers of ourselves; confident in our own strength; doaters upon this present world; too much wedded to our own will and pleasure; complainers, murmurers, envious, wavering and inconstant in our good purposes, unmindful of other men's miseries, revengeful and implacable, which are all bars to the obtaining of God's mercy. And therefore prayer is absolutely necessary to remove them; that is, to remember us of God; to keep him in remembrance, and to maintain an acquaintance with him; to fill us with love to him; to humble and abase us in our own thoughts; to draw our hearts off from this vain world, and to settle our trust in him alone; to fix our dependence on him, and subdue our wills to his; to give us a taste of spiritual pleasures; to make us thankful, contented, and well satisfied; to move our compassion towards others who stand in need of our help, as we do of the help of God; to incline us to be pitiful, and to do good and forgive; without which we confess, in our very prayers, that we cannot expect forgiveness from God.

This consideration shows that prayer is so necessary, that there can be no goodness nor virtue in the world without it; but mankind will grow strangers unto God, and he unto them; which will bring all things to confusion.

CHAP. III.

The sense of all mankind about this matter; especially of our blessed Saviour.

IV. It is truly therefore observed by Origen, (in his book of prayer newly come to light,) that all people in the world pray who own a providence, and set a Governor over the uni-

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verse[e]: the contrary opinion that there is no need of prayer, being the doctrine of those only, "who are either altogether atheistical and deny the being of God, or of those who own a God in name, but take away his providence." Which is manifest from hence; that all nations, by a strange consent, have ever thought it necessary to offer up some sacrifices, as an acknowledgment of the sovereignty of God, and of the interest he hath in all that we enjoy; and as an humble supplication of his continued favour unto those who own him to be the possessor of heaven and earth, by returning him some part of those good things which he hath bountifully bestowed upon mankind. This was the nature and meaning of sacrifices from the beginning; which, being all now abolished by the sacrifice of Christ, and yet it being natural to mankind to offer something to God, it remains that we present him continually with the sacrifice of prayer, together with that of praise and thanksgiving; which are a part or concomitant of prayer, as we learn from many places of holy scripture; where they are scarce distinguished, but used as words of the same signification. They are both joined together in the fiftieth Psalm. *Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the Most High: and call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me*[f]. These prayers and these thanksgivings, being presented by worthy persons, as Justin Martyr tells Trypho the Jew, are "the only perfect and well pleasing sacrifices unto God[g]." To whom the sacrifice of beasts was never acceptable, no, not when by himself appointed; unless they were significations of pious and devout minds, begging pardon, imploring mercy, and rendering thanks for benefits received.

Alms indeed are also called a sacrifice; but they then only are truly so when we give them as an acknowledgment of God's bounty unto us, with humble prayer to him that he would be pleased graciously to accept them. They are often therefore joined together, particularly in the story of Cornelius, to whom the angel said, *Thy prayers and thy alms are come up for a memorial before God.* First his *prayers*, and then

[e] Sect. 13. Περὶ εὐχῆς. [§ 5. tom. i. p. 203 F.]

[f] Ps. l. 14, 15.

[g] Τέλειαι μόναι καὶ εὐάρεστοι τῷ Θεῷ θυσίαι.— Dialog. cum Tryph. [§ 117. p. 210 B.]

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his *alms;* which are an offering or sacrifice, when they attend upon prayer and thanksgiving; whereby we are naturally put in mind of the poor and needy, and stirred up, even by the feeling we have of our own necesssities, to relieve and succour them.

We pay no homage to God then, if we omit this duty; we live wholly without God in the world, and give no token, no signification that we own his being. We rank ourselves among atheists or Epicureans, who are men only in name, having lost the common sense of all mankind; which hath ever led them to acknowledge God by solemn supplications and thanksgivings to him.

V. Which is a duty so necessary and so essentially flowing (if I may so speak) from human nature, that Christ our Lord, it may be in the next place observed, lived in the constant performance of it.

Christ, I say, *in whom dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily;* nay, who was *God blessed for ever*[h]; who in that respect needed nothing, and was able to effect all things; yet, as he was a man, prayed and made supplication for those things which as he was God he already possessed, and could presently communicate to the human nature by his immediate conjunction and intimate union therewith. Notwithstanding this, he asked them of God, and beseeched him to bestow them, because it was necessary and natural so to do; because it became a creature to own its dependence on an higher cause, to give to the Creator the honour due unto his name, and to testify by this action his submission and obedience, his humility and love, and that, how highly soever advanced, (as the human nature of Christ was to the utmost degree of honour,) due acknowledgment ought to be made by it unto the Most High, who is the fountain of glory and honour.

And here I take it to be very remarkable, that there is no kind of prayer whereof we have not an example in our Lord Christ. Of Secret Prayer we read Luke v. 16. where it is said, *he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed:* spent that retirement from company and other employments, in thoughts of God and acknowledgments of the honour he had done him, and in prayer for his constant presence with him.

[h] [Col. ii. 9; Rom. ix. 5.]

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Of Private Prayer with his disciples that passage seems to be meant, Luke ix 18. *And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?* i. e. in his retirement from the multitude, attended only by his disciples, he first prayed, and then began, by way of inquiry and asking questions, to instruct them in his religion. As for Public Prayer, we read often of his going into the temple, *the house of prayer* at Jerusalem, and of his frequenting the synagogues, which were places for religious assemblies all over the country.

We read also how he prayed for others, as well as for himself: for Peter, *that his faith might not fail*[i]; for all his apostles, that his *joy might be fulfilled in them*, and that God would *keep them from the evil of the world*, and that *they might be sanctified through the truth*[k]; for his whole church, *that they may all be one, as he and the Father are one*[l], &c. And on the cross he prayed for his bitterest enemies, as before for his friends[m]. And after all we read, that it was his custom thus to pray to God. *And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the Mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him. And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation. And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down and prayed, saying, Father, if thou be willing*[n], &c.

And as he prayed, so he gave thanks, particularly at the raising of Lazarus out of his grave[o]. And he acknowledged and praised God for revealing his will, *not to the wise and prudent, but unto babes*, whom he employed to be the ministers of the gospel of his kingdom[p].

And as we have examples in him of all sorts of prayer, so it is further observable that he hath left us the like examples of the Times and of the Manner of prayer.

For Times of prayer; we read in Mark i. 35. of his Morning Prayer: *And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and prayed.* And in the Mark vi. we read of his Evening Prayer; for when the day was far spent, (ver. 35.)

[i] Luke xxii. 32. [k] John xvii. 13, 15, 19. [l] Ver. 21. [m] Luke xxiii. 34. [n] Luke xxii. 39, &c. [o] John xi. 41. [p] Matth. xi. 25.

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he fed a great multitude miraculously, and then constrained his disciples to go into the ship, while he sent away the people; which being done, *he departed into a mountain to pray*[q]: he prayed also at Meals, as we find ver. 41. of that chapter; when he had taken the loaves and fishes, *he looked up to heaven, and blessed*, (or *gave thanks*[r],) for those good things which the bounty of God bestows for the food of mankind. And lastly, we read of Extraordinary Prayer, where a special occasion required it; for just before he ordained his twelve apostles, *he went into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God*[s].

As for the Manner, we find he did it with all fervour; *with strong cries*, saith the apostle[t], where he adds *tears also* as an argument of his great piety. Secondly, with perfect submission; as we find when he prayed for the removal of the bitter cup, which nature very much desired, but he asks with this humble resignation of himself to God, *Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done*[u]: *not what I will, but what thou wilt*[x]. Thirdly, with all due reverence and devotion; for we read there, that *he kneeled down and prayed*[y], and *being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly*[z], and with greater expressions of reverence, for *he fell on his face*, as the manner was in great distresses[a]. And, lastly, with frequent and repeated importunities; for he prayed three times for the same thing, with the same submission and in the very same words also: and, more than all this, he prayed even for that which he was sure God would bestow upon him, because he having always possessed it as he was God, he knew it was designed for him as he was man, in God's eternal decree; I mean, his glorious preferment into the heavens, to sit down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. For which he *lift up his eyes unto heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee*[b]: and again, *and now, O Father, glorify thou me with thy own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was*[c].

Lay all these things together, and they will teach those that consider them both the weightiness and the great dignity, as

[q] Ver. 46, 47. [r] John vi. 11. [s] Luke vi. 12, 13. [t] Heb. v. 7. [u] Luke xxii. 42. [x] Mark xiv. 36. [y] Luke xxii. 41. [z] Ver. 44. [a] Matt. xxvi. 39. [b] John xvii. 1. [c] Ver. 5.

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well as necessity, of this duty. Unto which who can choose but be awakened when he sees the Son of God so industrious, so unwearied in it? For if Jesus prayed, as Origen argues[d], and prayed not in vain, but obtained what he asked, and without prayer could not, we may well think, obtain it, which of us can be so negligent as not to pray?

For to what end can we think was all this done by him, but to show us the obligations of human nature; and to make us sensible of our dependence on God; and that we can have nothing without his will; and that it is absolutely necessary our wills should be wholly regulated by his? He did not all this barely to give us an example, but to demonstrate and make us know, that no man, though never so perfect, can live to God without praying to him.

CHAP. IV.

Other arguments of the great necessity of prayer.

VI. It may be useful to us further to consider that God hath appointed his Holy Spirit to assist us in this duty: which is a convincing demonstration of its great necessity, if we will judge of things according to the account which God makes of them. Who, lest this duty should not be well done, lends us his power to perform it acceptably unto him. And shall we suffer the Holy Spirit to wait upon us to no purpose? Nay, shall it follow us continually, and urge us to have recourse to God, inspiring us with good thoughts, and exciting pious desires; and we refuse to be led and conducted by its holy motions? This is as unnatural as for a man to have a soul, and never think; to have a tongue, and never speak; eyes and a power to see, and never open them.

VII. It is as considerable also, that he hath appointed his Son to be our Mediator and Intercessor with him in the heavens. Which supposes both that we will do this, and that it is most necessary to be done. For otherwise we make void this new

[d] Περὶ εὐχῆς, num. 39. [§ 13. p. 216 C.]

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office of our blessed Saviour's, which God the Father, in his infinite wisdom and tenderest compassion, hath erected. We make him an Advocate without clients; an Intercessor who hath nothing to do, but waits in vain for our petitions.

Good Lord! that men should be so ignorant or presumptuous as to account themselves Christians, and never or seldom lift up their minds and hearts unto him in the heavens; nor feel any need of his patronage; nor make use of his most powerful interest for the obtaining any blessings for them: which they cannot have, unless they address themselves to God for them in his prevailing name, and his alone.

VIII. The necessity also of this may be understood by the frequent injunctions we meet withal in holy Scriptures for *praying always, praying without ceasing, and with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit;* as I have before noted. Which declare it to be a business of such importance, that we cannot subsist without it, but must use it as constantly as we do our meat and drink; or rather more constantly, it being of such great concernment, that it is as necessary as our very breath.

The incense in the temple, as St. John teaches us, Rev. viii. 3, represented the prayers of the saints. Now it may not be unworthy our observation to note, that whereas the *show-bread* (whereby an acknowledgment was made, as some think, that they received all their food from God,) was renewed and set upon the holy table in the sanctuary but once every week; and the *lamp* in the temple (which signified perhaps the light of God's word) was dressed once every day: the *incense* (which certainly signified their prayers) was renewed, by God's order, twice every day, and offered upon the altar morning and evening. Which may suggest unto us that we ought to be more sensible of the need we have of the word of God and prayer, than of the need of our daily food; but especially of prayer. Though we read often, yet we stand in need to pray oftener.

IX. For it is our main security, our great safeguard, our refuge and place of retreat in all the dangers unto which we are

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exposed in this present world: and therefore is not only mentioned by the apostle as a part of the Christian armour, but set also in the last place, as that which completes all the rest of the *whole arm our of God*[e]. Μέγα γὰρ ὅπλον ἡ εὐχὴ, as St. Chrysostom often speaks[f], 'for prayer is a mighty weapon' and powerful defence, without which no man can be able to stand and maintain his ground against the assaults of temptations, nor overcome his spiritual enemies; but by which we lay hold upon the arm of the Almighty for our defence and succour, and engage the power of God to be with us, and assure ourselves, if we rightly manage it, of a certain victory.

For herein we employ all the other parts of the *whole armour of God*, which the apostle there requires us to take unto us, and to put on us. We use our knowledge of the *truth*; and act our *faith*, our *love*, and our *hope*; and have recourse to the *word of God*, particularly to his precious promises; and declare our sincere affection to all *righteousness*, and our upright intentions to persist and continue therein, by the help of God which we implore. So that it is the more necessary, because by prayer all the graces of God's Holy Spirit are continually exercised and kept in use; the whole armour of God is girt closer to us; and we are made more expedite and ready on all occasions to encounter with the enemies of our salvation.

X. Whence it was, you may observe in the last place, that holy men, who lived the life of God in this world, could never be persuaded to omit it. I will give but one instance of this, in the prophet Daniel: who, when he had received the command of a great king to forbear praying to his God for the space of thirty days, durst not consent to a compliance with his will and pleasure. And yet Daniel was a good subject, as well as a wise man; who was very sensible what ready obedience ought to be paid to kings, and how necessary this obedience was, where a contrary antecedent necessity did not lie upon him to obey God; especially when the thing was enjoined under the penalty of death, and when his sovereign did not re-

[e] Ephes. vi. 13.

[f] Μέγα γὰρ ὅπλον ἡ εὐχὴ, μεγάλη ἀσφάλεια, μέγας θησαυρὸς, μέγας λίμην, ἄσυλον χωρίον,—Hom. xxx. in Gen. cap. 11. [tom. iv. p. 301 A.]

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quire a total forbearance of this duty, but only for a limited time. And yet so it was, he chose rather to lose the favour of his prince, who had been very kind to him, nay, to lose his life as well as his honour; and, more than that, to be thrown into the den of lions, there to be torn in pieces and devoured by those ravenous beasts; than to omit his constant devotions to the supreme Lord and Sovereign of heaven and earth. For, saith the history of his admirable piety[5], *when Daniel knew that this decree was signed*, (mark that,) *he went into his house, and his window being open toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.*

Which shows that, in his opinion, it is more necessary to pray and give thanks to God than it is to live; and that there is a necessity also of the frequent returns of this duty. For three times a day (as often as he did eat or drink) he continued, notwithstanding the great hazard he run therein, *to pray and give thanks before his God.*

CHAP. V.

Some reflections upon the foregoing considerations.

BEFORE I proceed to lay before you the great advantages we have by the serious performance of this part of our Christian duty, it may be useful here to rest a while, and only look back upon what hath been already discoursed. Which if the reader will please to do with a composed mind and attentive thoughts, he may soon know what to think of his condition, if he never set himself to this holy employment, or rather heavenly privilege, of making devout addresses to God by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, for all the benefits of which we are desirous or he hath already conferred on us.

1. Such men are without God in the world; estranged from the Father of their being; contemners of his most excellent Majesty; usurpers upon his sovereignty; that set up for themselves, and live as if they were the original of all things; who

[5] Dan. vi. 10.

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stand in no need to be beholden to any one higher and greater than themselves. Guilty they are of the highest treason, because they refuse to pay the most natural and necessary acknowledgment unto the Most High. They will not own him as their Lord, nor make any significations of their dependence on him; but use him as if he were only a name, to whom we owe a slight respect, but no solemn, constant reverence and service.

Lay this to heart, I beseech you, whosoever you be that do not make it one of the most serious businesses of your life to pray unto God. Consider what you are; in what relation you stand to him; and what a bold disowning of him this is, that you may be humbled for it, and come and bow down yourselves, and kneel before the Lord your Maker, to beg his pardon for this contempt, to beseech his grace, and assure him hereafter of your faithful service.

2. And that you may so do, learn from the foregoing instructions, to pray to God, not merely because you think he will have this acknowledgment or else be very angry, but because he ought to have it, as we are his creatures; who cannot be happy without a due respect to the Father of our being, the Fountain of all bliss. If you think this duty might have been left undone, had not God exacted it by some positive law, it may make you less forwardly inclined unto it; nay, apt perhaps to grumble sometime at the burden, (as you may be prone to account it,) and too willing to find pretences that may seem equitable and fit to be allowed for the omitting it. But if you look upon it as enacted in the very laws of our nature; as standing upon no weaker ground than our very beings, which we deriving from God are bound thereby to acknowledge him; you will not desire to be excused from it, nor be backward to it; but please yourselves, as well as him, in this most delightful employment.

Remember, you ought to look up unto God in prayer and praises, because it is a natural duty; and that your nature strongly inclines you to it, because you are weak, and in want; and that you should make it your choice, because it is a most noble privilege to be admitted into God's presence; and that you should choose to do it frequently, because you will be so much the more happy, by having him oft in your thoughts,

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and by being much in his blessed presence; who is able to impart everlasting felicity to his devout and faithful worshippers.

3. Of which happiness let us not deprive ourselves by forgetting God our Maker; but be moved, by the many arguments whereby I have enforced it, to the solemn practice of this duty: unto which we are formed by nature, and mightily excited and assisted by grace.

Never rise out of your bed, but, before you go about any thing else, make a tender of your most hearty service unto God; implore his blessing; let him know that you intend to be faithful to him all that day; that you remember your obligations to him, and are resolved to make good your promises; and so beseech him to go along with you, and to "prevent you in all your doings with his most gracious favour, and further you with his continual help; that in all your works begun, continued, and ended in him, you may glorify his holy name, and finally by his mercy attain eternal life," &c.

And do not offer to put a bit of bread into your mouths till you have acknowledged God, who spreads your table for you, and beseeched him to bless the gifts of his goodness to you, and to give you grace to use the strength you receive from them in his service.

In like manner, rise not from your meat without a renewal of your thankful acknowledgments for your refreshment, with such seriousness that it may be truly a grace, and not merely so called. That is, an hearty expression of your gratitude to him, and of your desires to have grace to be as dutiful to him as he is bountiful to you, in these and all other benefits he constantly bestows upon you.

And never think of putting off your clothes to go to sleep, before you have commended yourselves and all yours unto his merciful protection; and reflected on his goodness, and thanked him for his mercies past; and expressed your humble confidence in him for the time to come; and beseeched him to make you fit and willing to die, and to be for ever with him.

Business, I know, is the pretended impediment to all this. But is there any business of such moment as that which we have with God? Or can any other business be likely to succeed without his blessing? Or have we the foolish confidence to expect his blessing, and never ask it? Who is there that can

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say, his affairs in this world have suffered by spending some time in commending himself and them unto God? Nay, what business is there that doth not go on the more cheerfully and prosperously when we have reason to think that God is with us? according to that wholesome saying, "Robbery never enriches; alms never impoverish; and prayer hinders no work." Observe it; as no man hath the more in this world for what he gets dishonestly, by theft, or cheating; nor any man the less for what he gives away out of love to God and his poor brethren: so no man gains time for his business by that which he robs God of in not praying to him; nor loses he any time by that which he spends with God in this holy duty.

Therefore let none of us upon any account neglect it; but think we do ourselves right, as well as God, by the serious and solemn performance of it. Our own wants, one would think, should stimulate us sufficiently unto it. Or, if we could be supposed to want nothing, yet, the sense we have that we hold all we call ours by the mere mercy of God, should powerfully move us to acknowledge him, and to pay him our homage of thanks and praise, and humble ourselves before his Majesty, as nothing without him. Yea, it is an honour, and singular favour, we should think, to be admitted into his sacred presence: as I am sure we should esteem it, did we enjoy the same privilege with earthly princes. Into whose presence we should not think we could come too oft, if they would permit it: but we should be ambitious always to stand in their sight; and look upon ourselves as highly dignified, if they would be pleased to make us their familiars. Let us not then be so perverse as to live, as we thought the Lord of heaven and earth doth us an injury, or lays an heavy burden on us when he requires us to attend him: that is, when he bids us come to him, and first ask, and then receive his blessing.

Look upon our blessed Saviour, and observe how constant and unwearied he was in this holy duty; how frequently he went alone by himself to give thanks to God, and to implore his continued presence with him; how diligently he went to the temple when he was at Jerusalem, and to the synagogues when he was in the country; how he acknowledged God in the most common benefits; how much time he spent publicly and privately in his company; with what strong cries he called

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upon him in the days of his flesh; with what submission, with what reverence, with what repeated importunities; and then think with yourselves, are you in less want of the help of God than our blessed Saviour was? Can you live well enough without praying to him, when his only-begotten Son could not? Why do you not then go to him with fervent desires? why do you not imitate the Son of God in the frequency of your addresses?

To what purpose hath God given you his Holy Spirit, if you will not obey its motions? To what end is the Lord Jesus appointed to be your intercessor, if you will send up no prayers to be presented by him in the court of heaven? Why doth he call upon you to *pray always*, if you need not pray at all? Consider all these arguments over again; how naked you are without this divine armour to defend you; how all God's graces languish and die, if this do not continually maintain them; how good men have thought it better not to live than not to pray and give thanks to the God of their life: and they will prevail with you not to be strangers unto this heavenly employment. An employment wherein you will find much comfort and no less success, if you do not negligently discharge it. For God hath a love to souls, and greatly desires their improvement. He would have them advance even unto his likeness, in righteousness and goodness, and true holiness: else he would not so invite them, and call upon them as he doth to fix their eyes upon him; he would not have given them such help and assistance, and discovered such a wonderful love unto them as he hath manifested in the Son of his love, Christ Jesus.

The heathen thought it sufficient to desire God to hear them, out of the love he bears to immortal spirits when they cry unto him. So I find one praying, in an ancient Greek poet, whose words are these:

> Κλῦθι μοὶ, ὦ Πάτερ, θαῦμα βροτῶν
> τᾶς ἀειζώου ψυχᾶς μεδέων[1] ———

'Hearken unto me, O Father, thou great wonder of mankind: who takest a special care of an ever-living soul.'

But we have a great deal more to build our hopes upon,

[1] [Melanippides, apud Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. v. cap. 14. p. 716; et Euseb. Præp. Evang. lib. xiii. cap. 12. p. 680.]

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and may say, "Hear us, O Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; who hast astonished us with the wonders of thy love in him: hear us, out of the love thou bearest unto the Son of thy love: hear us, for his sake, who laid down his life to redeem our immortal souls; who lives for ever to make intercession for us. Thou who hast bestowed already so surprising a gift without our asking, hear us, and give us what we ask of thee, when we ask it in his name, who gave himself for us, and hath assured us that, *with him, thou wilt give us all things.*"

CHAP. VI.

The honour God doth us in admitting us into his presence.

Among other false conceits which men have of this duty of prayer to God, these two are very prejudicial to its performance.

First, they look upon it only as a duty laid upon them by God's mere will and pleasure: which might be spared, there being no real need of it, if it were not for this; that God will have it, and hath ordained it.

Secondly, they imagine thereupon that he is beholden to them for what they do; and that they have performed such a great piece of service to him when they have prayed a while, that they thereby obtain a dispensation to do their own will, when they have satisfied his.

To rectify the first of these mistakes, I have shown this to be a natural duty, and not merely bound upon us by a positive law: a duty supposed by our Lord and Saviour, rather than commanded: for it arises from our being God's creatures; who are therefore bound to acknowledge him, and to wait upon him continually for the supply of our necessities from his bounty. And now I shall proceed to correct the second mistake; and thereby also further confirm what I have said concerning the necessity of this duty, by showing that this is so far from being a burden laid upon us by his mere will and pleasure, or any such service whereby we oblige him, or procure an indulgence, or connivance at what we do contrary to his will in other

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things; that in truth the service is done entirely to ourselves, whose righteousness cannot profit him. Who intends hereby to make us really good, nay excellent creatures: whose duty it is to look upon ourselves as infinitely beholden to him, that he will suffer us to come into his presence upon all occasions, and call him our Father.

This I shall demonstrate by representing, first, how honourable and excellent an employment this is: secondly, how comfortable and truly delightful when performed as it ought: thirdly, how beneficial, both to make and preserve us such as we ought to desire above all things to be.

Of the first of these I shall give a brief account in this chapter: wherein I shall endeavour to make the reader sensible that this duty, which our own necessities call for and exact of us, is in itself a most noble and excellent employment. For it is the 'ascent of our mind to God,' (as the ancient Christians describe it[k],) 'a familiar converse, an holy discourse with the Lord of all:' the withdrawing of our minds from this world and all things in it, above which it raises our thoughts, and lifts them up unto the first and chiefest Good; into whose company it brings us, and sets us in his blessed presence, that he may lift up the light of his countenance upon us. For though it be the expression of our deepest humility, yet thereby we "are lifted up above the highest top of heaven, and passing by angels, present ourselves before the royal throne itself:" as St. Chrysostom's words are upon this subject[l]. From whence we may learn by the way, that they little thought in those days of addressing themselves to any of the ministers in the heavenly court, though never so high; whom they passed by, and went directly to the divine Majesty, as we now may and ought to do.

This he represents in an excellent discourse of his upon another subject, as the high dignity of Christians, of which the angels themselves are spectators, and very much admire the honour that is done us. "[m] For as, if in the presence of a great army, before the captains and great officers and consuls, an ordinary person be admitted to the speech of the king, it fixes

[k] *Ἀνάβασις πρὸς Θεὸν, ὁμιλία, διάλεξις*, &c. [Chrysost. de Orat. disc. i. tom. ii. p. 779.]

[l] [ibid.]

[m] *Περὶ Ὁμοουσίου*, tom. i. p. 372. [tom. i. ed. Ben. p. 512 B.]

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all eyes upon him, and renders him the more illustrious and venerable; so it is with those that pray to God: for think with thyself what a great thing it is for thee, who art but a man, in the presence of the angels, the archangels, the seraphim, the cherubim, and all the rest of the heavenly host standing by, to be permitted to approach with much confidence, and to speak with the King of those powers. What honour is there that can equal this?"

Nor were the better sort of pagans without this notion of prayer; that it is our conductor unto God, brings us into his divine light, sets us in his presence, draws him to us by a divine persuasive rhetoric, and powerful sympathy with him; nay, knits and unites us unto the first Being, and moves his bountiful goodness to communicate all good things to us: it being the opening of our souls to God, that he may fill us. To this effect Proclus discourses[n].

And is not this the most incomparable honour that can be done us, to be made thus familiar with God? The higher any persons are, the more we think ourselves ennobled when we are admitted into their society, especially if we may at all times have recourse unto them, and be kindly received by them. By which we may judge what account to make of the honour to which we are preferred, by being brought into the company of him who is higher than the highest. With whose most excellent nature to have true communion, is the greatest perfection whereof we are capable, either in this world or in the next.

And how is it possible to have serious thoughts of him, and not in some measure be assimilated to him? For while he is in our mind, we are, for the present, necessarily made such as he is; holy and pure, gracious and merciful, tender and kind, satisfied and well-pleased in all things. That is, we cannot think of him without some transformation of our minds into his blessed likeness while we do think of him: of which more anon.

By which you may understand, that it is not merely an external honour which is hereby done us; but by devout prayer we are naturally endued with true greatness and noble-

[n] Proclus in Plat. Timæum, lib. ii. *Δημιουργὸς πειθοῦς θείας*, &c. [p. 65 F.]

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ness of mind; raised above these little things here, (how great soever they seem in vulgar account,) by having a sight and feeling of an infinite good. Unto which if it fasten us by faith and by love, we are made the friends of God: who have no reason to envy the greatest persons in this world; but rather to look down with pity upon them, if they be strangers unto God.

By conversing with whom, you may further consider, our minds are both refined and spiritualized; and also much widened and enlarged: which are two most excellent qualities, wherein devout prayer improves us, by the constant exercise thereof.

1. Our souls indeed are spiritual things: but being tied to these bodies, and thereby engaged in worldly affairs and fleshly concerns, they grow earthly and sensual, dull and heavy, if we take not care to keep up their familiarity with their spiritual acquaintance and kindred in the other world. This we do by prayer; which is a continual exercise of our most spiritual powers, a daily conversation with spiritual things, even with the Father of spirits himself and his divine perfections, and with the state and condition of our own souls, both as they are now at present, whether they lie in sin and wickedness, or be endued with true holiness and goodness, and as they will be in the other world, either in the blessedness of heaven, or in the torments of hell; and with our Lord and Saviour, the great Judge of all, who will sentence us either to the one or the other, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and in the glory of all the holy angels; and with the Holy Spirit, the Inspirer of all good thoughts and fervour in our desires; who, together with the Father and the Son, is worshipped and glorified.

All which things being perceived only by our minds, and by no other means, do very little affect the hearts of those who never lift up their thoughts above this world in prayer to God, but appear most real and weighty things to those that do. Particularly God's most glorious perfections, and the incomparable glory wherein our blessed Saviour shines in the heavens at God's right hand, appear the most lovely, the most beautiful, and every way the most excellent objects unto those that have their minds and hearts fixed on them: as we have, when withdrawing our thoughts from sensible enjoyments, we apply them

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wholly to converse with God, in praises of him, and thanksgivings to him, and earnest desires after him. By which also we are made to understand of what consequence it is to our happiness to be acquainted with him, and with our blessed Saviour, and with the Holy Ghost the Comforter; and we also daily improve that acquaintance, and are made more conformable to him, as the only way to that happiness.

Which is excellently expressed by Origen[o], upon those words of the Psalmist, *Unto thee, O Lord, I lift up my soul*:—"The fancy of all earthly things being discharged, and the eyes of the mind lifted up to think of God alone, and to converse with him (who listens to us) in a solemn and becoming manner, how can they choose but be very much improved, *beholding with open face the glory of the Lord, and being transformed into the same image from glory to glory*[p]? For they partake at that time ἀπορροῆς νοητοῦ τινος θειοτέρου, 'of a certain diviner sort of intellectual influence,' derived to them from God: according to that, *Lord, imprint the light of thy countenance upon us*[q]. The soul also being lifted up aloft both follows the spirit, and is also separated from the body: nay, it not only following the spirit, but being in it, why should we not say that it is carried above itself, and ceasing to be a mere soul, becomes spiritual?"

Of such things men that never pray to God, or are seldom seriously conversant in this duty, have no apprehension at all; but are perfectly blind, and stupidly senseless of invisible and spiritual enjoyments. Whereby their minds are straitened and narrowed, having no thoughts beyond their own poor selves, and that only in this present world; when they that set their minds to an holy converse with Godin this spiritual duty by this means mightily widen and enlarge them, (which is the other advantage I mentioned,) extending their desires and cares so far as to make them solicitous for the welfare of the whole world, both now and for ever.

2. This is one of the greatest excellencies of holy prayer, that it enlarges our spirits so far as to enable them to extend their charity to all men, which it is not in our power by any other means to do. We approach unto infinity and immensity

[o] Περὶ εὐχῆς, sect. 29. [§ 9. tom. i. p. 211 D.]

[p] [2 Cor. iii. 18.]

[q] Psal. iv. 6. ['Εσημειώθη ἐφ' ἡμᾶς τὸ φῶς τοῦ προσώπου σου, Κύριε.—LXX.]

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in our desires and wishes, and in our good will and readiness to benefit all the world. Every part of which, though never so far distant from us, we may help this way, and express our affection to it, though we are so contracted and limited in all other abilities but this, that we know not how to serve them in any thing else. Our prayers alone can reach them; and there is no country nor people out of their reach: but in these holy desires we may stretch forth our souls to the furthermost parts of the earth, and looking up to heaven draw down the blessing of God upon them.

By which we may learn the necessity as well as the excellency of prayer. Without which we grow strangers unto God and our heavenly country; dull, earthy, poor-spirited and despicable things, minding only ourselves, and looking no further than this present world, and our particular concerns therein: but by the practice of which we maintain our acquaintance with God and with the spiritual world; nay, become friends of God, and grow great-minded, heavenly, spiritual, able to look beyond our little selves, nay, beyond all things visible; large, comprehensive, full of high thoughts and lofty designs; possessed with divine affections; moved by truly noble ends; fraught with generous desires and transcendent hopes, which fill our hearts with proportionable comfort and satisfaction.

I conclude this with the words of St. Chrysostom[q]: "As the sun gives light to the body, so prayer doth to the soul: and therefore if this be the great calamity of a blind man, that he sees not the sun, what a loss is it to a Christian not to pray continually, and by that means bring the light of Christ into his soul!"

CHAP. VII.

The pleasure which springs from the serious performance of this duty.

THE great man just now named would have us, when we pray, "to think ourselves to be ἐν μέσῳ ἀγγέλων, 'in the midst of the holy angels[r],' and that we are performing their service. For though we are far removed from them in other things, in their nature, diet, wisdom, and understanding, yet prayer is

[q] Περὶ προσευχῆς, λογ. 1. [tom. ii. p. 779.] [r] Ib. λογ. 2. [p. 784.]

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the common employment and business of angels as well as men. By which we, being segregated from beasts and knit to the angels, shall shortly be translated into their polity, their manner of life, honour, nobility, wisdom, and understanding; spending all our life in the service of God." Which is a very pleasant contemplation, and a fit introduction to the second thing I undertook to demonstrate; how comfortable and truly delightful it is to approach unto God, in such holy thoughts of him and devout affections to him as we are supposed to have when we make our prayers with praises and thanksgivings unto him.

And here it may be sufficient to consider only these two things.

First, this must needs be a delightful employment, because therein we *draw nigh to God*, as I have already said; which is the description the holy Scriptures give us of it.

Secondly, in so doing, we commend ourselves and all our concerns unto the care of infinite Wisdom, Power, and Goodness; which is a great part of the business of prayer to God.

1. The former of these may be easily understood by considering, that to *draw nigh to God* is to fix our minds on him, and lay open our souls before him, in whose presence is fulness of joy and everflowing pleasure.

That which produces pleasure in us is the application of our faculties unto suitable objects, with suitable operations about them. And the nobler the faculties are, and the higher the objects, the greater must the pleasure needs be which arises from their conjunction. Now our minds and understandings are the highest powers which we have, and God is the highest object on which our minds can fix; and therefore the application of our souls to him by the thoughts and affections of our minds (which are their operations) cannot but produce the highest pleasure, as much above all bodily pleasure as our souls are above our bodies, and God above all worldly things.

If we feel no such pleasure in our approaches to him, it is because our thoughts of God and our affections towards him are dull and lifeless. We do not stir up our souls to think seriously of him when we fall down to worship him, but suffer our hearts to be far off from him when with our lips we draw nigh to him. For were our minds possessed with settled thoughts of his almighty power, all-seeing wisdom, boundless

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goodness, tender mercy, and careful providence, in compassing us and all creatures, bestowing great benefits on us now, and intending greater, they would unspeakably delight us. The smallest glance we have of any of these infinite perfections (which we acknowledge in the beginning of all our public prayers) touches us, if we mind what we say, with a singular pleasure, though we cannot at that time have more than a short thought of them: and therefore what joy may we not receive from hence in our secret and retired devotions, when we may stay and look as long as we please upon any of those divine attributes which affect our hearts; delighting ourselves in the thoughts either of his power, which nothing can control; or of his knowledge, from which nothing can be hidden; or of his wonderful love, which thinks nothing too great to give; or of his overruling providence, which makes *all things work together for good to those that love him*[r]; or of his impartial justice, which in due season will not fail to render to all men, both good and bad, according to their doings.

And when these pious thoughts stir up in us the passions of love and hope, and longings to be more filled with such delightful thoughts of him, and affections towards him, the pleasure must needs be exceedingly increased; as every one may be convinced who are not so ill-natured as to have nobody that they love in this world. For they that have a faithful, especially if he be also a powerful friend, find nothing so sweet and delightful as to love him sincerely, and to be sincerely beloved by him: and therefore to feel in our hearts an ardent love to God, which naturally makes us hope we are beloved by him, cannot but give us a taste of the most excellent of all other pleasure. And proportionable to the degree unto which our love arises will be the comfort and satisfaction that it yields.

Now, how can we choose but have this passion excited in us, and that to an high degree, when we set ourselves to pray to God, and to praise his holy name? For it is some degree of love which is supposed to carry us to him: and when we are come into his presence, and look upon him as love itself, who is good to all, and hath been extraordinary kind to us, we cannot fail (if we act in this as we do in all other affairs) to feel an higher degree of it, proportionable to the sense we have of

[r] [Rom. viii. 28.]

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his goodness unto us in particular, and of his universal goodness unto all creatures in general, according unto their several needs and capacities. Of which universal goodness we should be more sensible (as an excellent person hath observed[s]), if we did accustom ourselves to look upon his kindness unto us but as one single instance and example of it, and, by what he hath done for us, conceive what he doth and hath done for all in their several kinds: which could not but raise up in our minds the highest admiration of him, and such an ardent love to him, as would make us rejoice in him for the present, and repose an entire confidence in him for the future.

2. And that is the second thing; by commending ourselves to the love and care of God's almighty goodness (which is one great business of prayer), we give our minds the sweetest and most solid satisfaction. For having entrusted ourselves and all our concerns with him, in an assured confidence of his fatherly kindness to us and faithful care of us, we may comfortably look upon every thing that befalls us as certainly intended for our good and happiness. And what a delightful thought is this, even in the midst of all the troubles of this life, if at any time they surround us! How pleasantly may we look upon all things, even those which look sourly upon us, and threaten mischief to us, when we can look upon them as proceeding from the wise orders of him on whom we have cast all our care, in a full belief that he careth for us!

And thus we may and ought to believe, because he hath told us as much. And if he had not, we might have learnt it from ourselves; who are at ease, and trouble ourselves no further, when we have commended ourselves unto a powerful friend, and left all our concerns in his hands, with an undoubted confidence in him that he will do that which is best as far as he knows and is able, that is, far better than we could any ways do for ourselves. Now we are absolutely sure that God knows and can do all things; being no more liable to any mistake than he is defective in his power to do what he judges most conducing to our good: which is more than can be said of the highest creature in this world, or in the other. And therefore, if we can make him our friend, as we may by commending ourselves and

[s] Dr. Bright's Treatise of Prayer. [Chap. i. sect. 6. p. 43. 8vo. Lond. 1678.]

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all we have unto him, with a pious trust in his mercy, and entire devotion of ourselves to his service, why should not our heart be more at ease, freer from all care and fear and trouble, than we are when a powerful friend hath taken us into his protection? inasmuch as there is no friend like to God, who can give us such certain security as he doth that all things shall go well with us.

Let us try and not deny ourselves this high satisfaction, by giving up ourselves to God, and putting all we have into his hands; beseeching him to dispose of every thing belonging to us as he in his wise goodness sees most meet, and to dispense himself to us according to the most just rules and measures of his unerring providence. For then whatsoever is cross to our natural desires we may most cheerfully and comfortably receive, because it comes from him; and whatsoever is agreeable to them we may as certainly and comfortably expect, if it be wholesome for us. That is, we may be freed hereby from all grief and trouble, and from all cares and fears; and not only so, but be able to rejoice in the Lord alway, as St. Paul exhorts with a repeated earnestness, Phil. iv. 4: *Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice:* and then adds the means thereof in the next verses but one; *Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

But the greatest comfort of all will be, when we quit these bodies, to think that we shall lose nothing very considerable thereby, much less lose our souls; but having fast hold of God, be only closer knit unto him, in that love towards him and delight in his love towards us which we have continually exercised in prayer to him: which, as the better sort of pagans could say, is a familiar conference with God, wherein we discourse with him about our translation from hence, and return unto him. Concerning which if we never here confer with him, we shall be miserably to seek in the other world, when we find that we have lost our acquaintance with him, which we ought by continual prayer to have kept up and maintained. And then our hearts would have been wonderfully full of satisfaction at our departure, to think that we were going only to be better

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acquainted with him, and to perfect the friendship we had here begun, by nearer communion with him in heaven.

This is the notion which Porphyry had of it. We are here, saith he, ἐν φρουρᾷ, 'inclosed in this body as in a prison,' like children separated and at a great distance from their parents; who ought to 'pray to the gods (as their language was), who are their true parents, about their return to them[t].' And whosoever they are that do not thus pray to them will find that they are no better than ἀπάτορες καὶ ἀμήτορες, 'fatherless and motherless children,' who will have none to take care of them and be kind to them when they are loosened from these bodies to which they are now chained.

A lamentable condition this; whereby we may understand the comfort of going to God as an ancient acquaintance when we go out of this body. How joyfully may we go to him with whom we have held a constant good correspondence, nay, maintained a sweet familiarity, by daily prayer to him! which will not let us doubt of a kind reception from him, in whose company we have delighted much to be while we were in this world, and have long desired to be nearer unto him, and to be for ever with him.

This is some of the pleasure of their life who have a continual intercourse with Heaven in serious prayer to God; who communicates also, by his own immediate influences upon holy souls who look up unto him, such heavenly joy in this duty as I am not able to describe. For who can doubt that he frequently illuminates their minds and strengthens their thoughts to understand and perceive his divine perfections more clearly and lively than they could of themselves, and thereby raises up their love and their hope and their joy to a greater height of satisfaction? which he increases also by secret touches upon their hearts, exciting all these beyond the pitch to which our highest thoughts would advance them.

But omitting this, I shall conclude this head with the words of St. Chrysostom[u]; which will serve also for an introduction to the next.

"Prayer is the employment of angels, and much exceeds even their dignity; as appears by this, that they approach

[t] Apud Proclum in Tim. lib. ii. [p. 64 B.]
[u] Περὶ προσευχ. λογ. α'. [tom. ii. p. 779.]

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with great reverence into the Divine presence, teaching us to address ourselves to God with the like fear mixed with joy: with fear, lest we should prove unworthy of this favour; with joy at the greatness of the honour that is done us mortals, in permitting us to converse continually with God: by which we get out of this mortal and temporary state, and pass over to immortal life; for he that converses with God must necessarily get the better of death and corruption. Just as those things that are always enlightened with the rays of the sun cannot remain in darkness; so it is impossible that they who enjoy familiarity with God should continue mortal. For if they who are taken into the society of a king, and advanced to honour by him, cannot be poor; how much more impossible is it that they who by prayer have familiarity with God should have mortal souls. Ungodliness and an irregular life is the death of the soul; therefore the worship of God, and a conversation suitable to it, is its life. Now prayer leads us to an holy life becoming the worship of God; nay, it marvellously stores our souls with the most precious treasures. Whether a man be a lover of virginity, or study purity in a married estate; whether he would suppress anger, or purge himself from envy, or do any other good thing; prayer is his conductor, and, smoothing the way for him, makes the course of virtue ready and easy. For it cannot be that they who ask of God temperance, righteousness, meekness, and goodness, should not obtain their petition."

CHAP. VIII.

The great benefits we receive by serious prayer to God.

WHAT force there is in prayer, both to make us and preserve us such as we ought to desire to be, may be understood in great part by what hath been already discoursed on the two foregoing heads. Wherein I have represented how it raises, spiritualizes, widens, and greatens our minds; filling us with high thoughts, possessing us with heavenly affections, satisfying us in the love of God, putting us into the Divine protection, securing us against all events, and drawing down upon us the Divine blessing. In short, it is a vast improvement of our

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minds, by lifting them up above themselves, as well as above this world; and that not only for the present, but tying us fast to God by a constant sense of him, which it is apt to leave upon our minds, it puts us into a pious temper, and constantly disposes us both to do aright and to judge aright also.

For if we would know whether a thing be good for us to have, we need but consider whether we dare pray for it or no; and whether a thing be lawful to be done we understand, by considering whether we dare recommend it to the Divine blessing, and beg his presence and concurrence with us in it. This is commonly a good direction, and will put a stop to us in all bad proceedings. Nay, so great a power there is in prayer, that we perceive the good it doth us even before we receive that which we come to ask. "For no sooner doth a man lift up his hands to heaven," as St. Chrysostom's[x] words are, "and call upon God, but he is snatched from this world, and translated into the other, if he pray with care and diligence; so that if anger boiled in him, it is presently quieted; if lust burnt, it is quenched; if envy gnawed, it is easily expelled: for as the Psalmist observes, that when the sun arises all the beasts of the forest lay down in their dens, who in the night had crept forth; so when prayer goes forth out of our mouth, the mind is enlightened as with a certain beam of light, and all unreasonable and brutish passions steal away and dare not appear. Nay, if the devil himself was there, he is driven away; if a demon, he departs, provided we pray with attentive and waking minds."

But I will sum up what I have to say on this argument in this single consideration. If it be highly beneficial to be truly good and godlike, we are highly beholden to devout prayer, which is a blessed instrument thereof. Now all mankind cannot but agree in this, that it is our highest perfection, and therefore nothing ought to be more desired by us than to be made like to God in righteousness, goodness, and true holiness, unto which it is easy to show we are formed by every part of prayer: whether we acknowledge the Divine perfections, (which it is senseless to praise, and not to make our pattern,)

[x] Περὶ Ὁμοουσίου, Hom. 32. [Hom. vii. contr. Anom. ed. Ben. tom. i. p. 512 C.]

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or confess our own guiltiness, (which is a disowning and condemning all evil courses,) or make an oblation of ourselves to him that made us, (whereby we deliver up our wills to his,) or give him thanks for his benefits, (whereby we confess the obligations we have to be wholly his,) but especially when we petition him for pardon, (which supposes we resolve to be better,) or for his Divine grace to assist us to perform our duty faithfully; of which if we have a serious desire, it will incline us and dispose us thereunto, (for all creatures endeavour to accomplish their own desires.) Nay, it will powerfully move us to pursue what we would have, by such means as God to whom we pray directs us to use for the obtaining thereof.

Nay, the very thought we form in our mind, when we set ourselves to pray, that we are going to God, to place ourselves in his presence, who sees all things, even the most hidden motions in the secret recesses of our soul; which accordingly frames itself to please him, as present to it, and inspecting it, and penetrating to the bottom of it, searching the hearts, and trying the reins: this thought, I say, and the alteration it works in us, is of such great advantage to us, that if we should suppose him who prays to God to be a gainer no otherwise, he ought (as Origen[y] observes) to be thought to have received no common benefit, who thus reverently and piously disposes and frames his mind at the very time of prayer. By which how many sins are banished, and how many good deeds are produced, they can tell who apply themselves continually to pray unto God with such serious thoughts of him. For if the remembrance, and especially the presence of an excellent man, stirs us up to imitate him, and ofttimes stops our inclinations to that which is bad; how much more profitable will the remembrance of God the Father of all with prayer to him be, to those who persuade themselves that they stand before him and speak to him from whom nothing can be hidden! This he confirms by many places of the holy Scripture, and concludes, that "if we got nothing else by prayer, we should be sufficient gainers by putting our minds into a posture to pray as we ought[z]."

[y] Lib. Περὶ εὐχῆς, sect. 26, 27. [§ 8. p. 210 B.]
[z] Ib. sect. 31. [§ 10. p. 212 A.]

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This may be further demonstrated by glancing briefly upon every part of the Lord's Prayer, which no man can put up to God with understanding, with seriousness, and with fervent desires, and not be thereby made better.

For how can we call God *our Father,* and not reverence him, and be filled both with a filial fear of him and with love to him, together with hope and joy in him?

How is it possible to desire his *name may be hallowed* by all, and we ourselves continue to dishonour it?

We do not, sure, desire his *kingdom* should *come,* and exempt ourselves from his government, and deny him our obedience.

Nor pray that *his will may be done,* resolving to do as we will ourselves.

We cannot beg of God our *daily bread,* and not rest contented therewith; much less be insensible of his bounty, if he give us more than daily bread, and bestow upon us, perhaps, great plenty and abundance.

When we pray him to *forgive us our trespasses,* we are at the same time taught to forgive others, or to hope for no pardon ourselves: and this is one of the hardest, though a most reasonable and noble part of Christian virtue.

When we pray God *not to lead us into temptation;* with what face can we think fit to run into it?

And when we beseech him to *deliver us from evil,* especially from *the evil one;* we are strangely forgetful and careless if we run into those sins which throw us into the very mouth of that *roaring lion,* who *goes about seeking whom he may devour.*

And, in the conclusion, who can acknowledge that his *is the kingdom;* that is, he rules over all; and yet not stand in awe of him, and honour him more than any earthly majesty? And that his *is the power,* and not depend on him and trust him in well doing, but expect that he will subvert us in evil courses? And that his *is the glory,* and not give him thanks for all his benefits, and use them to his honour and glory, and the doing him service in the world?

That is, who can think seriously of all his incomparable perfections, which are expressed in those words, *thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory,* and not have some suitable

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affections in his heart, disposing him to do that which is well-pleasing in God's sight, who hath it in his power to make us either happy or miserable for ever and ever?

This is so plain a truth, that we cannot so much as say a short grace before and after meat, but it will dispose us, if we mind what we say, to the practice of such Christian virtues as are proper at that season. "We shall not easily, that is, drink too much, or play the glutton," as St. Chrysostom[a] observes upon those words 1 Sam. i. 9, 10, "but the remembrance that we must pray to God when we have done eating and drinking, will be a restraint upon us, and make us use his good gifts in a convenient measure. For a table begun with prayer, and ending in prayer, cannot want any thing that is good, and therefore let us not neglect so great a gain. For is it not absurd, that when our servants, who wait upon us, bow and give thanks if we reach to them any portion of that which is set before us; we ourselves, who enjoy so many good things, should not pay this honour unto God, especially since by that we shall dispose ourselves for greater blessings? For where prayer is and giving of thanks, there is the grace of the Holy Spirit, and the demons and all the adverse powers fly away. He that is about to pray dare not speak any absurd thing; no, not in the midst of the meal: or if he do, he will presently repent of it when he comes to speak to God. And therefore, in the beginning and in the conclusion of our meals, we ought to give thanks to God; for this cause especially, that we shall not (as was said before) easily fall into drunkenness, if we be settled in this pious custom. Which we ought not to omit, though we should chance to be overtaken, and to rise up from the table with our heads heavy by too much eating and drinking; for though we offend now, we shall correct this shameful practice the next time."

Thus that excellent man presses prayer and giving of thanks upon such occasions, as a means to restrain us from those sins which are then too common, when a sense of God doth not govern our appetites, and preserve us in a holy fear of offending so great a Benefactor as he is continually to us. Whose grace the more earnestly we desire, the more certain we are to

[a] Hom. 2. de Anna, tom. 2. [tom. iv. ed. Ben. p. 719.]

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obtain it. For what can we suppose the good God to love more than a soul that hungers and thirsts after true righteousness? which it expresses by constant and hearty cries for it unto him who hath promised it shall be satisfied therewith. Neither religion nor common reason will let us doubt that he doth most willingly communicate himself to such thirsty souls, and bestow this incomparable blessing upon every one that importunately seeks it at his hands. Let us but show him, in our prayers, that we are sincere lovers of him, and of all goodness; that we unfeignedly long to be better ourselves, and to see all the world amended; that to be pure and undefiled we desire more than any earthly pleasure; that we would have the *peace of God rule in our hearts*, and *all our things done with charity;* in short, that we would *be filled with all the fulness of God;* but as for all other things, we refer ourselves wholly to him, and desire them only so far as they may conduce to our being or our doing good; and we may assure ourselves of his gracious acceptance, there being nothing in heaven or earth more pleasing to God than this holy temper of mind and spirit. Which therefore he will cherish, promote, and increase (if our desires and endeavours after it continue earnest and constant) till he hath brought it to perfection. For, as St. Romanus told his persecutors[b], "the sacrifice wherein God delights is a soul that looks up unto him; his only food is the salvation of those that believe."

CHAP. IX.

The three foregoing chapters improved.

BEFORE I proceed to that which I further intend, it may be fit to consider these two things.

First, That we want no incitement or encouragement to the serious performance of this duty frequently.

Secondly, That we have a clear direction, in what hath

[b] St. Chrysost. Hom. 48. tom. 1. [ed. Ben. Serm. ii. in S. Rom. mart. tom. ii. p. 621 C.]

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been said, to make a right judgment of ourselves, whether we perform it as we ought, or no.

1. As to the former, let us consider how we will answer it to God, if we be not mightily excited by what I have represented to be frequent and fervent in this holy duty, whereby we may receive such great benefits, such true comfort, and such high honour and preferment, as to be admitted into the divine presence, and to have society with the almighty Goodness, who alone can fill our souls, and the thoughts of whom do really fill them and give them satisfaction. Especially when we have any reason to believe that he loves us; which we have just cause to conclude when we feel that we heartily love him: one proof of which is, our loving to be much with him, and delighting in his company. From which we can never depart unsatisfied; but, carrying away a comfortable belief that he is with us, and will prosper and bless us, may pass our time delightfully here in this world, and cheerfully receive all events which at any time befall us, and rest perfectly contented in every issue of his wise and good providence; unto which we have commended ourselves with a full trust and confidence that it will dispose all things to our advantage.

This the very heathen saw, in some measure, to be every man's interest as well as duty; which made Plato most judiciously resolve[c], that "all men who have the least degree of wisdom and sobriety call upon God ἐπὶ πάσῃ ὁρμῇ, &c. when they begin to move towards any undertaking, whether it be great or whether it be small." And to the same purpose is Porphyry his observation long after: that "all wise men, in all nations, περὶ εὐχὰς ἐσπούδασαν, &c. 'have been very diligent and frequent in prayers,' as a thing of mighty importance[d]."

Which we Christians better understand than they could do; and therefore should think it most advisable upon all occasions to apply ourselves to God, about every thing both small and great; because we believe him to be the Governor and Disposer of all things; who can make them instruments of our grief and sorrow, or of our joy and comfort, as he thinks good: and because (it appears from what hath been said on this subject)

[c] In Timæo. [p. 27 C.] [d] Proclus L. 2. in Timæum. [p. 64 B.]

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that so much of our life in this world is celestial and divine, as we spend in this exercise of prayer to God.

Unto which therefore let both high and low, rich and poor, betake themselves, as to the great instrument of their happiness, here and eternally.

Let the poor pray that they may be contented; and the rich, that they may be truly thankful.

Let the low and the mean pray that their spirits may be raised and ennobled, enriched and well satisfied; and let the great and noble pray that their minds may be humbled and abased, their hearts emptied of self-confidence, pride, and contempt of others.

Let all pray that they may acknowledge God, and maintain a sense of him in their minds, and give up themselves to his service, and beseech his grace and favour suitable to their conditions.

Let those who are still bad pray to be made good; and they that are good to be made better. And if they really and heartily desire what they ask, they will be more and more successful in their desires. If they be not, they may conclude their hearts were not right with God, or they did not with becoming earnestness and fervency apply themselves unto him (with a sense of their own great unworthiness) for his mercy and grace towards them.

2. For hereby, as I said, we may take a measure of ourselves, whether we perform this duty as we ought, or no. By which I have shown we may reap the greatest spiritual benefits and comforts: and therefore, if we find that our minds are more composed and settled; if our hearts be more contented; if we be better satisfied in our condition; if we be more resolved in our duty, more steadfast in well-doing, more patient in suffering; if we can more cheerfully submit ourselves to God after we have commended ourselves to him; if we be more in love with all that is good, and more averse to every thing that is evil: it is a sign that we have prayed aright, because our prayers have done us good.

Let all that read this treatise examine themselves upon this point. Are your minds made more spiritual by your prayers to God, the Father of spirits? Have you a greater sense of him remaining in your minds, and a more lively sense

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of the other world, and all the concerns thereof? Are you raised above the petty concerns of this? Do you feel your souls enlarged in universal love and charity? Can you trust God more confidently? Are you less disturbed with fears and cares, and such-like passions? Do your prayers make you more just and merciful, more compassionate and charitable, more candid and favourable to others, more ready to do good and to forgive, forward to contribute what you can to the comfort and happiness of every one?

Are your inordinate passions and appetites not only curbed and restrained thereby, but more subdued and mortified? Do your prayers give you a taste of such pleasure in God, and in holiness and goodness, as makes you desire to be better acquainted with them, and to prefer them above riches and honours, and all manner of sensual pleasure? Is pride, ambition, and vain-glory, is malice, hatred and revenge, is anger and wrath, covetousness and care for the things of this world, daily suppressed and deadened?

In short, do we find that our thoughts are at rest in God and in his love? Are our hearts well pleased and satisfied in his favour and grace towards us? Is this the highest boon we can beg of God, that we may be thoroughly and universally good? And when we find ourselves improving herein, and making any advancement towards that perfection to which we aspire, is it the greatest pleasure to us of all other? Are we abundantly satisfied in this thought, that by God's grace and goodness to us, every thing shall do us good? Are our hearts set upon rectifying all disorders in our souls, and, provided we can but feel an amendment, are we quiet, and in peace, and less concerned about external things, which we cannot rectify according to our desires? Then it is certain our prayers have been truly devout, and highly acceptable to God, as we may perceive by this blessed change in our hearts.

Which if we do not yet feel, let it not quite discourage us, but only quicken our spirits to more frequent and fervent prayer; with greater intention of mind, and due consideration what it is we ought most to desire in our prayers to God. And if we do not content ourselves barely with so many prayers, but long and labour till they have their effect, in such an alteration as I have mentioned, in our hearts; they will at

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last procure this blessing, if we be restless and earnest in our desires after it.

And therefore let us not slacken our endeavours herein; but setting our hearts upon those graces which we ask of him, let us pray to him, among other things, that he would enable us every day to pray better and to more purpose; with stronger affections, and more eager desires; such as will work our hearts into a more exact conformity with himself and with our blessed Saviour, and both make us more pure, and more in love with purity of mind and body; more heavenly-minded, and entirely satisfied in our heavenly acquaintance with him and with our Lord, and in the hope we have at last to come unto him, in that happy place where there will be nothing left for us to desire; but all our prayers be turned into praises of him and thanksgiving to him, who hath accomplished our wishes and fulfilled our petitions, by bringing us into his celestial palace, and there providing mansions for us wherein we shall attend upon him for ever.

Thus I have given a brief account of the efficacy of prayer to make us truly good. Which is so evident a truth, that St. Chrysostom confidently saith[e], "When I see a man neglect this duty of prayer, or that he hath no love to it, no fervour in it, it is manifest to me that he is owner of nothing worthy or excellent: but when I behold a man unwearied in the service of God, and that doth not reckon constant attendance upon God in prayer among his greatest losses, I make account he is a steadfast practiser of all virtue, and the very temple of God. For it expels all vile and base thoughts out of the mind; it persuades us to reverence God, and the dignity to which he advanceth us; it teaches us to repel all the enchantments of the evil one; and raises our mind so high, that we look down with despisal and scorn upon pleasure: for this is the only pride that becomes the worshippers of Christ, not to submit to the service of any filthiness, but to preserve the freedom and liberty of their souls in a pure life. Which it is impossible to do without prayer: for who can exercise any virtue that doth not come and fall down before him frequently who is the Giver of it? Who can so much as desire to be sober or just that doth not delight to converse with him who requires these, and far greater things from us?"

[e] Λογ. τ. περὶ προσευχῆς. [tom. ii. p. 780.]

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A

DISCOURSE CONCERNING PRAYER, &c.

PART II.

CHAP. X.

Of public prayer, the most necessary of all other.

It is confessed by all who have a sense of God the Author of their being, that they were made to *glorify* him. Which, in the Scripture language, is another word for God's worship and service; consisting in those *praises, thanksgivings*, and *petitions* which make up the body of our prayers. By the first of which we acknowledge God to be what he is in himself, every way most excellently perfect: by the second, we acknowledge the benefits he hath done unto us: and by the third, we acknowledge our continual dependence upon him; which by humble prayer we confess to be so entire, that we cannot subsist without him. From which I have demonstrated, that thus to acknowledge God and our dependence on him is a natural duty; unto which we stand bound as we are men, and much more as we are Christians; who are made to know the great love of God in our blessed Saviour, by whom St. Paul desires, *glory may be given unto him in the church throughout all ages, world without end*[a].

I shall now proceed to show, that we ought not to content ourselves with the addresses we make unto God in secret or at home; but look upon ourselves as bound to assemble and meet

[a] Ephes. iii. ult.

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together for this end, that we may publicly acknowledge him by our prayers, praises, and thanksgivings. Which I take to be contained in those words of St. Paul now mentioned: wherein he expresses his desire that *glory* should be given to the Divine Majesty *in the church*, that is, in the assemblies of Christian people, (as I shall show hereafter,) and that not only in his days, but in all succeeding times, as long as the sun and moon endure.

Unto this we ought all to subscribe, and say *Amen*, as the apostle there doth; and accordingly join together, with one consent, thus to glorify God in this age, as Christians have done in all the preceding: that we may transmit the same practice unto those who come after us in the future generation.

Which is a duty, I shall show as I pass along, much more necessary and more highly acceptable unto God than any private action of this kind which we perform to his Divine Majesty: unto whom we ought to resort in our most secret retirements, as our Saviour instructs us in those words, *When thou prayest, enter into thy closet*[b]. But as this doth not exclude, I have already said, the public worship of God, so we ought not to think it is equal thereunto, but rather much inferior to that divine service which we perform in our solemn assemblies.

I am sensible how cross this is to many men's conceits, and how much the contrary opinion hath prevailed, to the great detriment of religion: and therefore I shall take the more pains to make this good, that the public service of God ought above all other to be carefully attended: or, that we ought not to satisfy ourselves with the addresses we make to God at home, but make a conscience also, and chiefly, to join in common prayers and supplications to his Majesty.

And if the advantages and comforts of prayer be so great as I have represented, I doubt not to work in the considering reader the greatest esteem of and affection for the public prayers: whereby those advantages and comforts may be reaped far more plentifully than by our private devotions alone. This I shall prove from three heads of arguments, under which I shall comprise all that need be said upon this subject.

[b] [Matt. vi. 6.]

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First, I shall make it apparent, by considering the nature of prayer.

Secondly, by considering the nature of man.

Thirdly, the nature of a church, in which Christian men are joined together to have fellowship with God and one with another.

CHAP. XI.

God is most honoured by public prayers.

In considering the first of these, viz. the nature of prayer, we may either look upon it as an act whereby we honour God, or as an act whereby we seek our own good. And either way the public prayers, which many offer to God with joint consent, will appear to have the preeminence above all other.

First, I say, if we have respect to God in what we perform in this holy duty, it is evident he is much more honoured by our public addresses to him than he can be by any thing we do in private. There indeed we may worship him very acceptably, and find the blessed effects of it in God's gracious communications of himself unto us, suitable to our necessities, provided we do not neglect his public worship: which the private ought not to hinder, but promote; because, in truth, it is defective without the public, being only worship, but not honour, glory, or service.

We read of all these four frequently in the holy Scriptures, *worship*, *honour*, *glory*, and *service*. The first of which may be performed in the most secret place; but the other three have respect to what is done in public. In our mind indeed we honour God wheresoever we worship him, if we have an high esteem of his excellencies; but we do him no honour, unless others see by outward signs and tokens the inward regard we have to him, or we make the voice of his praise to be heard among them. Then we *give him the honour due unto his name*, when others are witnesses of the esteem we have of his divine perfections, by such actions as naturally declare it; viz. by our solemn reverend acknowledgment of him in his public worship. Upon which if we do not attend, men have reason

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to think we are void of all sense of him, and have no respect to him.

For the honour that is done to any one among men is always a public thing; as those words of Saul to Samuel testify[b]: *Honour me before the elders of my people, and before Israel.* Thus Haman understood the word *honour*, when Ahasuerus said, *What shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour?* For thinking with himself there was none in whom the king delighted so much as himself, he answered, *Let the royal apparel be brought forth, and the horse on which the king is wont to ride, &c., and set the man thereon, and let it be proclaimed before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour*[c]. For he knew, that unless something was done in public, it would be no honour to him that received it. For who can tell what is in another's mind, (in which honour lies,) without such external signs as are real testimonies of his inward thoughts, opinion, esteem, and affection?

Thus the angel instructs Tobias and his son about the worship of God: *Bless God, praise him, magnify him, bless him for the things he hath done unto you in the sight of all that live. It is good to praise God and exalt his name, and honourably* (or *with honour*, as the words are in the Greek,) *to show forth the works of God: therefore be not slack to praise him. It is good to keep close the secrets of a king; but it is honourable to reveal,* or to publish, *the works of God*[d]. Which is the sense of the Psalmist[e]: *One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts. I will speak of the glorious honour of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works.*

And what hath been said concerning honouring God may, in like manner, be affirmed of *giving him glory;* that it is done by public actions: it being nothing else but the publishing and spreading the fame of his divine perfections, or of his wondrous works. This we learn, as from many passages in the Psalmist, so from our blessed Saviour himself: who, a little before his departure from this world, lift up his eyes to heaven,

[b] 1 Sam. xv. 30. [c] Esth. vi. 6, 7, &c. [d] Tob. xii. 6, 7.
[e] Ps. cxlv. 4, 5.

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and said, *Father, I have glorified thee on earth*[f]: that is, made him known to be what he is, published his whole will and pleasure, and done whatsoever he commanded him. And in like manner told his apostles, *Herein is my Father glorified, if ye bear much fruit*[g]: in publishing, that is, his holy gospel, and bringing many to the belief of it. Which is sufficient to show, that if we do not honour God by what we do in private; much less do we *glorify* him, which wholly refers to proclaiming his name, and setting forth his praise.

And from all this it follows, that we cannot be said to do him any *service* by our private addresses to him: whereby we only serve ourselves. For then we serve him by our worship, when we openly acknowledge him, and own him to be, what indeed he is, the great Creator and most wise Governor of the world; who therefore (we hereby testify and declare) ought, in our opinion, to be worshipped by all men with the same reverend regard which we pay unto him.

In brief, we do him honour when we openly declare, with that blessed company we read of in the Revelation[h], that *he is worthy to receive glory, and honour, and power: for thou, O Lord,* (say they,) *hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.*

Then we also *glorify* him when we declare his *greatness and goodness, and speak of the glory of his kingdom, and talk of his power. Worshipping the Lord in the beauty of holiness,* or in his glorious sanctuary, as the Psalmist speaks, xxix. 2; cxlv. 6, 11, &c.

And hereby we *serve* him very much, and do something which promotes his interest in the world: whereas all that we do in private only promotes our own.

This I shall explain in three particulars.

I. The public worship of God doth him great service, by maintaining a sense of God in the world, and preserving the notion of him: which would be in danger to be lost if his worship were only in secret, or among a few persons privately, where nobody knew what they did but they themselves. Such close and retired devotion would have no power to uphold and keep up a religious regard to the almighty Creator of all

[f] John xvii. 4. [g] John xv. 8. [h] Rev. iv. ult.

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things among his creatures. All that it could do must be upon those particular men themselves who secretly worshipped him; but upon others it could do nothing at all: for how could that preserve the knowledge of God which was not itself known? And how prone would men be to conclude that the being of God was only a dark fancy in some men's minds, whose single opinion could have no authority at all, but rather be despised, as being ashamed to own itself, or having no public approbation! Which the public worship of God gives it; and not only supports the belief of God's being in men's minds as the common sense of mankind, but is apt to strike men with some awe of him, when they see a great many, with humble devotion and reverence, with bended knees, and eyes lifted up to heaven, paying their solemn acknowledgments to his Majesty. Especially when they see him thus adored by men of the greatest place, and in the highest reputation of wisdom and knowledge: who will have an heavy account to give unto the supreme Lord and Judge of all, if they do not contribute to the upholding his authority among men, by frequenting the public assemblies, and by their reverend deportment there.

II. Whereby not only a sense of him in general is preserved, but a sense of his greatness and magnificence (as I may call it) is also bred and nourished in men's minds. Who, joining as one man in the same service, are taught not only that God is, but what he is, infinite in all perfections: for when a multitude of people meet together, even as many as a spacious place can contain, to worship the same Being, it doth most naturally signify and declare that he is exceeding great and glorious, whom so many own for their Lord, upon whom they depend for all they have or can have; which is not signified nor represented when only one or two or a few pray to him.

Therefore this is a reason, both that we should hold public assemblies, and that they should be as full as is possible, and all who belong to them should crowd unto them; to testify that they look upon him who is there worshipped to be the *great King over all the earth*, as the Psalmist speaks[h]; for, great numbers meeting together to do their homage to him, it is the most natural sign that can be contrived, (which private worship is not,) that we take him to be the Sovereign of the

[h] Ps. xlvii. 2.

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world, the Lord of all, above all, good unto all; in one word, the common Parent of us all, to whom we resort for his blessing.

This is a demonstration that public worship is to be preferred before all other, because most suitable to his most excellent Majesty, the best token of the high thoughts we have of him; the utmost we are able to do to testify how great and how good we believe him to be, how able and willing to help us all, as being equally related unto all.

And the more meet together for this end, the better this is declared, that he cannot be honoured and glorified enough; but we stand in need of the united thoughts and affections of all mankind, could they be assembled at once, to magnify his incomparable perfections.

Nay, if all creatures in heaven and in earth (as a very worthy person observes) could meet together in one body, to worship him at the same time and in the same place, it would still be much better; because more suitable to his most excellent Majesty, being still a better signification of his infinite perfections, and of his vast dominions, which he governs with inconceivable wisdom, and takes care of with a most provident goodness.

And though no one place here on earth is big enough to contain so much as one nation, or country, or great city; yet we meeting in several places of the same kind, and set apart for the same purpose to worship God at one and the same time, it approaches something near unto this: all the people that are under one and the same government hereby setting forth God's praise together at the very same moment, and in the like though not the very same individual place; where they uniformly acknowledge him with joint consent to be their common Preserver and Benefactor: which is far more agreeable to the perfection of his most excellent nature than the single or private applications that are made to him; in which there is no sensible declaration made what he is able to do for all, but only what he is able to do for one or for a few.

For which reason the universal church anciently observed certain set hours of prayers, that all Christians throughout the world might at the same time join together to glorify God: and some of them[1] were of opinion, that the angelical host,

[1] Origen Περὶ εὐχῆς, n. 33, 35. [§ 11. p. 214, 5.]

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being acquainted with those hours, took that time to join their prayers and praises with those of the church. For common reason led them to this thought, that those noble creatures are highly concerned to set forth to the utmost of their power the glorious honour of God's majesty; who, as he is exalted above all blessing and praise, so hath the utmost pitch of praise to which creatures can reach given unto him, when the whole family of heaven and earth combine together at once to worship him.

Thence it was that the Psalms of David, though many of them particularly concerned himself, were directed to the *chief musician* for the public service; as the way *to make his praise glorious*. So the Psalmist speaks in Psalm lxvi. which begins with a desire that *all lands would make a joyful noise unto God, and sing forth the honour of his name, and make his praise glorious*. That is, this was the way to do something suitable to the surpassing glory of his Majesty: for *great* (saith he elsewhere) *is the Lord, and* therefore *greatly to be praised in the city of our God*[k]. He was not *greatly praised*, suitably to his greatness, unless it were in that place where they all met together to praise him. No, the very private blessings bestowed on David he would have publicly celebrated by all the people. And therefore doth not only say, *I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall be continually in my mouth. My soul shall make her boast of the Lord*, &c.; but adds, *O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together*[l]. And therefore much more were the common blessings poured on them all to be thus acknowledged, and *his praise sung in the congregation of saints*, as the words are Psalm cxlix. 1, that is, by all the people of the Jews. Nay, by all people on the face of the earth, as he speaks Psalm cxvii., *O praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people*, &c. Which St. Paul shows in Rom. xv. 11. was accomplished, when the Gentiles submitted themselves to Christ and became members of his church; therein to praise him continually in their public assemblies.

III. In which the sense of God will not only be preserved, suitable to his most excellent greatness and goodness; but

[k] Psalm xlviii. 1. [l] Psalm xxxiv. 1, 2, 3.

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preserved pure and sincere, free from those dangerous mixtures which may sooner creep into it, to corrupt and embase it, if he should be worshipped only in private. Where every man may frame conceits of the Divine Majesty, agreeable to his own inclinations; and there is no such way to prevent or correct them as by attending upon the public offices of religion. Into which errors are not so easily admitted, because men are naturally careful about that which they expose to the public view; not being willing themselves to appear before others with such neglect as they are sometimes found in when they are alone. Or if there be any thing dangerous admitted there, it will soon be discovered, and if not redressed, yet opposed by good men; as all corruptions have been at their first appearance, though in process of time they have prevailed.

They began in private, and from thence by degrees adventured to appear in public; where they would have appeared sooner, if the common sense of mankind, or of Christian people, had not been against them.

There is nothing so sound but in time it may be tainted; yet it is likely the longer to remain sound when there is a public care about it: and besides, when it is corrupted, it is not in so many things as it would have been, had the service of God been left only to every man's private management; for then there may be as many false imaginations as there are men, and the whole body of religion entirely depraved.

As it is an act therefore whereby we do honour unto God, prayer ought to be public; that it may be seen we own him, and honour him, and that he may be honoured suitably to his transcendent greatness and his universal goodness: which require that he be universally acknowledged, as not merely a particular Benefactor, but as the common Father of us all; whose munificence is declared to be the greater, when he hath a number of clients and as many thankful servants, who come together upon the same business, to proclaim his praise, and show forth the wonderful works he hath done for them.

In sum, as a great multitude of poor people constantly waiting at the gates of an house speak him that dwells in it to be far more liberal and bountiful than he would be believed, if few or none were seen expecting there; even so do the

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assemblies of pious supplicants and devout worshippers spread the fame of God's inexhausted goodness far and near; of which there is no notice at all when few or none tread in the courts of his house, but content themselves with a private attendance on him. This very much damps the sense of God, at least of his infinite greatness and goodness; and as it represents him after a poor and mean fashion, so endangers the propagation of such notions of him as will disparage and dishonour him.

For which reason, there is no serious Christian who lays things to heart, but must needs be grieved and sigh to see such stately structures as our cathedral churches (which were built to contain a multitude of worshippers, and to represent the inconceivable greatness of him who is there worshipped) so very empty and void of people in our daily assemblies; as if we had forsaken God, or had lost all sense of the honour that is due unto him. This is a thing very much to be lamented, and speedily amended, lest God forsake us and make us a reproach, saying, as the prophet speaks, that *he hath no delight in us;* because we have dishonoured his holy name, and take no delight in his divine service.

CHAP. XII.

Public prayers most advantageous unto us.

Let us now proceed to consider the second part of this argument, which hath respect unto prayer as an act whereby we seek our own good: and it will appear as plainly that the public prayers contribute most unto it. If we had no other reason to assert this but that now named, it were sufficient that God is hereby most honoured. For whatsoever doth him most honour will certainly do us most good, according to his own maxim, *Him that honoureth me I will honour: but he that despiseth me shall be lightly esteemed*[m]. But we have other reasons also to demonstrate that if we have respect to ourselves in our prayers, and the good we derive thereby upon our souls and bodies and all our concerns, it leads us to the public prayers as likely to be most prevalent.

[m] 1 Sam. ii. 30.

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I. For, first, we may pray there with much more confidence than we can in those private petitions we put up to God, both because the things we ask publicly are approved as needful and good in the judgment of all, and are also sought for and desired by a common consent. And therefore we may be the more assured they are good for us; and being so, shall be bestowed upon us.

This is a thing of very great moment in prayer, to have a confidence of being heard: which we cannot have, as St. John teaches us, unless we not only *keep God's commandments, and do those things which are pleasing in his sight*[n], but also *ask according to his will*[o]. Now the matter of our prayers cannot be so well warranted to be *according to God's will*, when they are only of private conception, as it is when they have the stamp of public authority: and therefore in our single devotions we must needs fall short of that degree of confidence which we may have when we join in prayer with all our Christian brethren, who agree to ask the same thing, with a settled belief that it is agreeable to his will.

Common reason, and much more Christian humility, teaches us to suspect our own private understanding; which cannot give us such assurance that a thing is good and wholesome, and necessary for us, as the universal opinion of all our brethren about it doth work in us. Which is one advantage of joining in public prayers, wherein all agree, as being formed by the public judgment of the governors of the church, and accepted by the generality of God's people, and found by long observation to contain nothing but what is fit to be asked of the Almighty Goodness.

II. There are some things, indeed, which every one may be assured are undoubtedly according to God's will; and there are those who fancy that authorized prayers may as well be put up to God at home as in the church. But it is further to be considered, that the united force of a great many persons who join in a petition is far stronger and more prevalent than the address of a single supplicant. All mankind are of this opinion, in the addresses they make to earthly princes, from

[n] 1 John iii. 22. [o] Chap. v. 14.

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whom they hope more easily to obtain their suit when they come in a body, and present the petition of a multitude, than when one or two make the same request unto them. An example of which I remember St. Chrysostom presses his people withal, while it was fresh in their memories, to make them understand the mighty power of that prayer which is made *μετὰ συμφωνίας*, 'with the common consent' of all. "About ten years ago," saith he[p], "you know there were several persons apprehended who affected empire, and conspired to subvert the present government, one of whom, who was of great eminence, being led forth to execution, with a rope in his mouth, the whole city ran into the circus, where the emperor then was, and by their common cries pacified his anger, and obtained a pardon for him who deserved none. And if, to appease the wrath of an earthly prince, you all run forth with wives and children to deprecate his displeasure, why do you not all concur to obtain mercy of the King of heaven, not for one, (as in the case now named,) or two, or three, or an hundred, but for a world of sinners; that God, having a respect to your common prayers offered with joint consent, may release to them their punishment, and absolve you from your sins?"

Such petitions the ancient Christians thought so powerful, that they supposed they could obtain any thing of God; by combining, as it were, together to seek his favour, in the common prayers of the whole assembly. *Coimus ad Deum ut quasi manu facta precationibus ambiamus, &c.*, saith Tertullian[q]; 'we come by troops to make our prayers to God, that being banded, as it were, together, we may with a strong hand sue to him for his favour.' *Hæc vis Deo grata est:* 'this violence is grateful to God.' It is a force which he loves, and such pressing supplicants are welcome to his Majesty.

To the same purpose St. Ambrose speaks in his book of Repentance, as Mr. Hooker hath observed: "Many of the meanest being gathered together unanimously become great; and it is impossible the prayers of many should be contemned[r]." Which

[p] Περὶ Ἀκαταλήπτου, λογ. 3. [§ 7. tom. i. ed. Ben. p. 470 B.]

[q] Apolog. &c. cap. 39. [p. 31 A.]

[r] [The words of St. Ambrose, as quoted by Hooker, (Eccles. Pol. v. 24. § 2. vol. ii. p. 117.), are; "Multi minimi dum congregantur unanimes sunt magni; et multorum preces impossibile est contemni." Ambros. de Pœnit. lib. i. The passage

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was a notion so much rooted in the Jewish nation, that they have an opinion the prayers of the congregation were always heard, but not so the prayers of particular persons in private, as Mr. Thorndike observes out of Maimonides[s].

But we have no need of their opinion, or any one's else, to justify this, that there is the greatest force in the public prayers of many joining their desire in the same petitions. For St. Paul (who might presume to have as much power with God upon his own single interest in him as any man whatsoever, yet) thought the prayers of a great number of Christians would do him more service; and therefore frequently begs of the churches that they would assist him with their earnest prayers to God for him. Thus he writes to the Romans; *Now, I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit,* (observe how passionately he desires this,) *that ye strive together with me* (it is such a kind of phrase as that I mentioned of Tertullian's) *in your prayers to God for me: that I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judæa: and that my service, which I have for Jerusalem, may be accepted of the saints*[t]. And to the Corinthians; *You also helping together by prayer for us, that for the gift bestowed upon us, by the means of many persons, thanks may be given by many on our behalf*[u]. Where he plainly acknowledges it would be much to his advantage if many did contribute their help, both in prayers and in thanksgivings, on his behalf. Nay, he should be able, he thought, to preach the gospel better, and with more authority as well as freedom, if the common prayers of Christian people were not wanting on his behalf. *Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am in bonds: that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak*[x]. Behold how

is not found, however, in St. Ambrose's treatise on Repentance, but in the commentary falsely attributed to him on Romans xvi. 3. Hooker's reading of the latter clause is supported by the single authority of MS. Corb., that of the received text terminating differently, "multorum preces impossibile est ut non impetrent."—Tom. ii. col. 108 A.]

[s] Rel. Assembl. p. 173. [p. 213.]

[t] Rom. xv. 30, 31.

[u] 2 Cor. i. 11.

[x] Coloss. iv. 2, 3, 4.

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solicitous St. Paul was to have the benefit of the churches' common prayer. And how great a man was he! Inferior to none, but rather, as St. Chrysostom describes him[y], "the very best of men; the teacher of the world, who speedily passed, as if he had had wings, over sea and land; that chosen vessel, the spokesman of Christ, to espouse souls to him; the planter of churches, the wise master-builder, the preacher, the racer, &c., who left monuments of his virtue all the world over; who was snatched into the third heaven before the resurrection; who was taken up into paradise, whom God made partaker of ineffable mysteries; who received a more abundant grace, and laboured more abundantly than they all." This man begs for the public prayers, and could not be satisfied unless he was commended by them to the grace of God. A sign that he looked upon them as most efficacious: for though God (as Grotius excellently observes upon Matt. xviii. 19.[z]) "ofttimes grants to one man's prayers that which he asks; yet to many who unanimously join in the same petitions he gives both more willingly, and more largely, and more speedily."

Which by the way is an unanswerable reason why the public prayers ought to be in a known tongue, that all may join in desiring the same thing, and by their united desires prevail for the greater blessing. Hear St. Chrysostom[a], whose words upon 2 Cor. viii. 24. marvellously illustrate this, and all that I have said. Where the apostle exhorting them to show to those whom he had sent a proof of their love *before the churches*, he interprets it "in the public assemblies;" and then adds, "and this is no small matter, for great is the power of an assembly, or of the churches. Behold what their prayer can do: it loosed the bonds of Peter, and it opened the mouth of Paul. They that are about to be ordained therefore beg the prayers of the congregation; in like manner for those who are possessed, and for those that are in penance, prayers are made by the whole church, and not by the priest only. They all say one and the same prayer, a prayer full of compassion. For in this the people are concerned as well as the priest; they praying for him, as he for them. He saith, 'The Lord be with you;'

[y] Hom. xxxiii. de petitione filiorum Zebed. [tom. i. p. 517 D.]

[z] [Inter Critic. Sacr. ad loc. col. 651.]

[a] Hom. xviii. in 2 Cor. [tom. x. p. 568 A.]

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and they answer, 'And with thy spirit.' And what wonder is it if they pray with the priest, when they send up the holy hymns of the church, in common with the cherubims, and the powers above?"

This that good father repeats very often, and I wish it were imprinted in all our minds, and did sink down into all our hearts, Μέγα τὸ κοινὸν τῆς ἐκκλησίας[y], &c.: "the common prayer of the church can do much, when we offer up those prayers with an afflicted soul, and with a broken and contrite heart." The same Origen[z] tells Celsus, in words worthy to be remembered: "If when *two of us on earth agree together to ask any thing, it is granted by the Father of the just, who is in heaven*[a], (for God delights in the symphony and agreement of rational creatures, and is displeased with their discord and disagreement,) what might we not expect, if not only, as now, a very few, but the whole Roman empire agreed together to sue for the Divine favour? They might pray to him that said heretofore to the Hebrews, when the Egyptians pursued them, *The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace*[b]: and praying most unanimously, obtain greater victories than Moses then did by his prayer to God for help."

III. But further, we are to consider how much our zeal and devotion is naturally inflamed by public assemblies, which is a thing of great power in prayer. For it is that which the apostle calls *praying in the Spirit*, and *praying in the Holy Ghost*; with fervent, that is, and inflamed desires, such as the Holy Ghost excites when it is pleased to breathe upon our souls.

Now this, as I said, is even naturally stirred up by the fervour of those devout worshippers with whom we join our petitions. For who can see a great many good people fall down together, and kneel before the Lord their Maker, with hands and eyes lifted up to heaven, imploring his grace and mercy, (which are things supposed in Christian assemblies,) and not be thereby put in mind that it is a matter of great concernment about which they are so earnest? nay, be mightily moved to prostrate himself in like manner to worship the great

[y] Hom. iii. ad Pop. Antioch. [tom. ii. p. 37.]
[z] L. viii. p. 424. edit. Cant. [§ 69. tom. i. ed. Ben. p. 793, 4.]
[a] Matt. xviii. 19.
[b] Exod. xiv. 14.

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Lord of all, and to make him the same acknowledgments, which are as much due from him as from anybody else in the world?

Were a man never so dull or backward to religious worship, it is impossible but he should be in some measure affected, when he comes among a multitude whose reverend and serious behaviour in the Divine service testifies the inward respect they have in their minds unto that Almighty Being whom they so devoutly worship. It would certainly not only put him in mind of his duty, but incline him, with the like signs of humble and hearty devotion, to cast down himself in his blessed presence.

And the greater signs of ardency of desire and warmth of affection there appears in those with whom we are assembled, the more feeling we shall naturally have of it ourselves; it being impossible to be quite cold by the fireside, and to have no touch of zeal, when we are in the company of those who manifest a vigorous flame of divine love in their hearts.

Besides, it is a comfortable sight barely to behold a great company gathered together to own one and the same Father; who therefore cannot but look upon one another as brethren. This is St. Hierome's observation, *Major lætitia ex mutuo conspectu oritur*[c], 'the greater joy arises in every heart by the very mutual sight of each other.' For so it is when friends meet together, they rejoice to see the faces one of another, they bless the occasion that brought them into one and the same place; and the more there are of them, the greater rejoicing is there among them.

Now joy enlarges the heart, and dilates our spirits; it makes them spread so much, that sometime we can scarce contain them, but are transported beyond ourselves: as, on the contrary, sorrow and sadness contracts and shrinks up the spirits, flats and deadens them so much that we have scarce any life left in us. Upon which account the spiritual joy and gladness I spoke of, arising from the sight of so many Christian neighbours and friends, is a very great help to us in our devotion; making us to *pour out our souls*, as the Psalmist, speaks, with the more enlarged desire. It is but a dull and

[c] In iv. Galat. [tom. vii. col. 457 A.]

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melancholy thing to be alone, in comparison with the cheerfulness which a great company of the same mind and spirit naturally excite in each other's breasts.

By which we may understand also the advantage of full assemblies in our churches; which look more lovely, and therefore quicken more, than a thin, scattered congregation. Which is a damp to Christian spirits, because it is a very sad sight to behold the Divine service neglected; as it is, where there are but few that come together to do God honour.

The sum of this argument is, that as no man is so warm alone as in a crowd, so our spiritual fervour is more quickened in an assembly of pious worshippers than it is apt to be when we are retired by ourselves. Where we ought indeed to awaken our thoughts and stir up our affections; but it must be acknowledged that we want then a great help and spur thereunto, which is the holy zeal of those who join with us in the same petitions in the public assemblies: especially the seriousness, the gravity, and earnestness of him who ministers the service of God there; which, together with the authority of his office, the sacredness and majesticness sometime of the place, set apart entirely for such services, is apt to raise in us more ardent devotion than we can easily raise in ourselves alone.

IV. But if we had the same advantages of this kind when we are alone, (which we have not) yet there is one more, which wholly arises from our frequenting the public assemblies. And that is, the good examples we give to others, who may be hereby moved to become religious.

What we do alone nobody sees, nor is it intended that they should; but rather that it should be kept secret. And therefore it can be no inducement unto others to do their duty, but is the bare discharge of our own. For which cause it is the less valuable, because it doth the less good; for that is the best thing which doth the most universal good. By which measure if we judge of prayer, we must prefer the public; whereby others are put in mind of their duty, nay, attracted to it by our example: whereas we ourselves alone are profited by what we do alone.

It may be said indeed that we do good to others by praying for them. But this is a very small good in comparison, because

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it is more than they know; and while we neglect the public service, we do them more mischief than we can be supposed to do them good by our private prayers. For we bring religion into contempt, when it hath few or none that attend the public offices of it; and we let them want, as I said, the force of example, to awaken them out of that careless neglect of God which is too common in the world.

This is an argument that should prevail very much with all good minds, both to frequent the public service of God, and to behave themselves with an awful reverence therein. Which will have some effect upon the looser sort, who now are hardened in their impiety by the emptiness of our churches at the time of solemn worship, or by the negligence of their behaviour who vouchsafe to attend upon it. A multitude sways very much either way, to incline men to be good, as well as to be bad. It is hard to resist numerous examples. They are able to bring devotion as well as other things in fashion.

But if our example have not this effect on others, we have notwithstanding done the best we could to advance the service of God in the world; which will be a great comfort to us at present, and turn to our good account hereafter. We have let our light shine before men; we have testified openly to the truth of religion; we have expressed our affection to it, and reproved the impiety of those who regard not God: yea, we put a stop to the progress of this impiety; we hinder its growth and increase, by wresting a great argument out of their hands against religion; which is, that there are few who are religious.

If that then be good for us whereby we do the most good to others, which is an undoubted truth, we ought to be most in love with the public prayers: that we may invite others, by our constant attendance on them, to join with us in giving God the honour that is due unto him, and free ourselves from the guilt of other men's sins, which we draw upon ourselves, when, by giving little or no public sign of our devotion, we tempt them to become or continue irreligious. For as, by performing our duty alone by ourselves, we do only ourselves good, but profit not others, who receive great benefit by our public devotion; so, if we should at any time neglect our duty alone, we thereby hurt only ourselves: but by neglecting the public service of

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God, we hurt all that are near us by our pernicious example; tempting them to think that religion is only a private fancy, which some men have taken up without any reason; for were it a reality, all men would be concerned to maintain and uphold it the best they can in the world.

Thus I have given an account of the first argument for the necessity of public prayers, taken from the nature of prayer itself; both as it respects God and ourselves. By which it appears, that all those motives which I used in the first part of this book to persuade us to prayer in general are most efficacious to draw us to the public worship of God. There being no greater honour than to be known to be the servants of the Most High; by attending upon whose public service our minds are enlarged unto great and worthy thoughts of God, and our affections stirred up to the highest admiration of him, and love to him, who provides for so many as there wait upon him, nay, dispenses his blessings to the whole universe which we commend unto him. Whereby our hope and confidence in him is also exceedingly advanced, though we had never such great things to ask of him: having the united force also of a great many petitioners to strengthen it, who join together to solicit his favour. Which there likewise we are naturally inclined to seek in the most serious and the most composed manner; it being a shame not to frame ourselves, when we appear publicly upon such a weighty business, unto the most reverent deportment; which, I have shown, is of itself alone a singular benefit we receive by prayer to God. The sense of whom is the guide of our life and the stay of our heart; which is both upheld and raised to the highest degree by his public worship. Whereby, if we do not prevail for all those whose welfare and happiness we seek, we maintain and increase notwithstanding in our own minds a lively sense, an high esteem of those graces and blessings which we earnestly desire and ask for all mankind. For whose good as we ought to be concerned, so we are made more sensible of it, more affected with it, and solicitous for it by the public service of God, than we are inclined to be in our private devotions. This will appear in the management of the second general argument propounded in the beginning of this discourse: for which I design the next chapter.

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CHAP. XIII.

Public prayers most suitable to the nature of man.

I PROCEED now to consider the nature of man, as I have done the nature of prayer; from whence we shall more fully learn the necessity of God's public service: and that it is to be preferred before all other.

Prayer being a natural duty (as I have proved in the beginning), arising from the necessity of our own being, which is precarious and dependent on another, who ought therefore to be continually acknowledged by us; it will easily appear from thence that it ought to be public, and not alone by ourselves: because nature hath formed us to society, without which we cannot be preserved in safety. From whence innumerable arguments may be deduced for our public assembling together constantly to worship that Almighty Being, who hath thus by the very laws of our creation disposed us to join together for our common preservation. For,

I. We cannot but see at the very first mention of this, that we, being made to have society one with another, should above all things have society in prayer to him that made us, and continually maintains and preserves us.

For what can be more absurd than to have society in the lowest actions of human life, and not in the highest, which are of principal concern to us for our conservation? It is such an absurdity, as if we should join together to save one another's houses, but not to save one another's lives. And yet there is far less difference between a building of wood or stone and this excellent structure of our body, than there is between our worldly affairs and those of our immortal souls. Which teach us, at the first thought of such things, that if we were made to live together in society, and not alone, it is a just reason that God should be acknowledged by us all together, who is the founder of society; and as we transact all our common concerns together by meeting in a body, so the business of religion especially (which is the cement of society, and the fountain of all justice and charity) should be thus transacted, and we should with a common consent meet together in one place to adore and acknowledge him: which is the greatest concern we have in this world, even

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for this reason; because it supports, as you have heard, a sense of him, without which all society will be dissolved.

II. And there is the greater reason for this, because men are the only creatures here that are endued with a sense of God and of religion; and therefore should above all things join in that and study to promote it, which is most proper to them, and distinguishes them more than any thing else from the brutes. In whom we see some faint imitation of reason and discourse, but not the least sign of religion. Which may well be looked upon as the discriminating property in man; and make us think that he may be better defined a religious than a rational creature. This, at least, should be joined with the other, and he defined, a rational religious creature. For all definitions are taken from that which most peculiarly belongs to every being; and there is nothing so peculiar to us as a sense of religion. Which if we do not exercise together, we do not act like men; who in all reason should join to maintain and promote that which is most proper to them (viz. religion) more than any thing else in the world.

For which end God hath given to us alone the gift of speech, which no other creatures have besides ourselves; that we should proclaim his praises, and make it known that we honour him, and excite one another to the love of him, the Supreme Being. Who needs no words to tell him our thoughts, but is acquainted with the very beginning of them before they are formed; and therefore hath bestowed upon us the faculty of speaking, that we may tell our thoughts unto others, and make them understand that we are religiously affected towards him. Who, if he had intended religion should be only a private business, might have made us without tongues, because he needs no language to acquaint him with our desires; but hears our very thoughts, and perceives the most inward motions of our souls. Which we have power to express in words, not that he may understand us, but for the benefit of others, that they may understand our sense, and know that we are lovers of God, and be stirred up by our prayers, and praises, and thanksgivings to the same devotion towards him. Whence David calls his tongue *his glory*[d], because therewith he glorified God, and, as it there follows, *praised God among the people, and sung unto him among the nations*[e].

[d] Psalm lvii. 8. [e] Ver. 9.

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This St. Paul supposes, when he saith prayers ought not to be made in an unknown tongue, because if they were, *he that was not learned in that tongue would not be able to say Amen*[f]; which word *Amen* was then, it seems, pronounced at the end of every prayer by the whole company: for whom the public minister spake to God, and was, as it were, their mouth in what he said. But though it was thus ordered to avoid confusion, and that it might be distinctly known by everybody what was said in the church, (which had been impossible if they had all spoken together,) yet they thought themselves bound to signify and declare that he spake their sense, by saying *Amen* at the conclusion of the prayer he made. Which was as much, in effect, as if they had said every word of it themselves; for it was as much as to say, they approved of and consented to the whole. And this every one did so audibly, that, a great multitude being gathered together in a church, it imitated the voice of thunder; as St. Hierome tells us[g].

And verily, it is a great fault that we do not all thus join in the public prayers at this day; not only by our bodily presence, but with our tongues: which ought to express our consent to those petitions and thanksgivings which are offered up to God in the name of us all.

III. And there is a further reason for common prayer; because the blessings we enjoy in common together are far greater than those we enjoy singly and distinct one from another. We all breathe in one common air, and enjoy the comfort of one common light. The heavens drop their fatness in common upon every man's fields and pastures; and, which is more than all the rest, the great blessings of order and government (the benefits of which we all enjoy by being knit in the same society under the same governor) make it highly reasonable that we should join ourselves together as one man, to acknowledge these common blessings which make us all happy. For being made for society, and enjoying innumerable benefits thereby, (which this is not a place to mention particularly,) we have lost all sense of what we are, and what we have, if we do not think

[f] 1 Cor. xiv. 16.

[g] ["Ubi enim sic ad similitudinem cœlestis tonitrui Amen reboat, et vacua idolorum templa quatiuntur?"—Hieron. præfat. in Galat. lib. ii. tom. vii. col. 427.]

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ourselves bound to give God thanks for them in one body; begging his pardon for their abuse, and beseeching their continuance.

I name not now the greatest blessing of all, which is the redemption of mankind by Jesus Christ, (in which not a few particular persons, but all in general are concerned, it being the *common salvation*, as St. Jude calls it,) because it belongs to the next head; where we shall consider mankind as a church, bound to bless God above all things for his grace in the Lord Jesus.

Let us look at present only to the visible heavens, which encircle us all, and proclaim aloud, as the Psalmist speaks, *the glory of God* throughout the world. Behold the sun, that great minister of God, which preaches, as I may say, every where; and publishes not to one place or country, but to the whole earth the praises of the Lord. It is not a private whisper, but a public cry, which the heavenly bodies make: *there is neither speech nor language, but their voices are heard among them. Their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words into the ends of the world*[g]: which tell us what we should do, and call upon us to make the voice of his praise to be heard, as much and as far as we are able; who hath appointed such illustrious creatures to do us perpetual service.

Which is the meaning of the holy Psalmist, when he calls upon all creatures in heaven and in earth, both visible and invisible, to *praise the Lord*[h]. That is, he excites himself and others to give God thanks for them, and to acknowledge the praises which they continually give him: his most glorious perfections, that is, which they declare and set forth in the most public manner. For they speak to all, as much as they do to one, the most excellent immense greatness and goodness of the Lord, who in wisdom also hath made them all: and this we ought as publicly to declare, it being all that we can do for the honour of his name, but only live accordingly; which this also teaches us, and makes absolutely necessary, that we may eternally praise him.

There is an excellent discourse, I remember, in St. Chrysostom to this purpose, in his ninth Homily upon Genesis; where, showing how God hath preferred mankind above all other

[g] [Ps. xix. 3, 4.] [h] Psalm cxlviii.

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creatures, he concludes with this exhortation: "[i] Let us therefore give him thanks for all these benefits he hath heaped on us. This is no grievous, no burdensome thing which he expects from us: for what trouble is there in testifying our sense of his loving-kindness, in confessing our obligations, in returning our thankful acknowledgments for them? Which he, who is all-sufficient in himself, stands in no need of; but we ought to learn thereby to love the Author of all good, and not to be ungrateful, but study to live suitable to such a careful Providence over us.

"Let us not, I beseech you, be negligent in this; but think with ourselves continually, both what the common benefits are we all enjoy, and the private ones which he hath conferred upon any of us; both those which are manifest and confessed by all, and those which are concealed perhaps, and proper to ourselves alone. And by all let us excite ourselves to give him thanks, which is the greatest sacrifice, the most perfect oblation." Especially when we all join together (I may add) to confess his goodness, and declare the wonders he doth for the children of men.

"And whosoever he is that hath these things continually in mind, and reflects upon his own meanness, as well as the immenseness of the Divine mercy; how he governs us, and dispenses his blessings to us, not regarding what our sins deserve, but what is becoming his divine goodness; it is impossible but he should humble himself before God, and have a broken and contrite heart. This takes down all pride; this lays all arrogance low; this teaches us to be modest, and behave ourselves with all humility of mind; contemning the glory of this present life, and designing the future good of that life which is immortal." Thus he.

And we may understand how much more grateful it is to the Divine majesty to have all this done in public, than only alone by ourselves, by that passage among others in the Psalmist: *I will declare thy name among my brethren, in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee*[k]. Which the apostle applies to our Lord Christ, and interprets the words as if they were spoken by him[l], where he proves that Christ is *not*

[i] [Tom. iv. pp. 69, 70.] [k] Psalm xxii. 22. [l] Heb. ii. 12.

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ashamed to call us brethren, saying, *I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.* Behold here, how he makes this the voice of Christ himself; who taught us by his own example, how acceptable it will be to God the Father, and how profitable to ourselves, to praise the name of the Lord with the rest our brethren in the public assemblies; and proclaim both the benefits we have received from him, and the duty which we owe unto him.

IV. Unto which that we may be the more strongly excited, let us consider further, that the blessings we most want, as we are sociable creatures, being public blessings, they ought, in all reason, to be sought in our common prayers, as most generally needful for us all. For so you may observe, that the apostle directing the service of the church, in 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2, requires in the very first place, *that prayers, supplications, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men, for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.* Nothing he knew was of greater concernment to the good of the world than to have governors, whom he elsewhere calls the *ministers of God*, preserved in their just authority: especially to be blessed with good governors, who might be conservators of peace and quietness, punishers of vice and wickedness, a *terror to evil-doers, and encourager of those that do well.* And therefore he ordains that this great thing should be asked of God by public prayers; because it was of universal concernment, and of highest moment to every man's happiness; which ought to be preferred before any particular respects unto which their petitions might be directed.

Agreeable to this I find in Josephus[1], that the ancient Jews looked upon it as their duty, when they offered sacrifice unto God, to pray in the first place ὑπὲρ τῆς κοινῆς σωτηρίας, 'for the common safety, or salvation:' and then ὑπὲρ ἑαυτῶν, 'for their own private concerns.' For we are born, saith he, ἐπὶ κοινωνίᾳ, 'for communion and society one with another:' and therefore

[1] Lib. ii. contr. Apionem. [§. 23.]

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he who prefers the common concerns before his own private advantage, μάλιστα εἴη Θεῷ κεχαρισμένος, 'must needs be, above all others, very acceptable and dear to God.' This passage among others is cited by Eusebius[m]; and we may add to it what the Hebrew doctors now tell us in their books, that the last thing the high priest prayed for on the great day of expiation, just before he came out of the holy place, was this; that "God would not hear the prayers of those who were in a journey[n]:" that is, prayers made for men's own private benefit, against the public interest; such as the prayers of those in a journey are wont to be, who desire fair weather, when all the country prays for rain.

But howsoever this was, it is plain, by the apostle's words, that he would have those things principally asked of God which related to the community: which ought therefore to be sought by their common prayers and supplications. And so they were anciently in the Christian church, as we find in Tertullian (to name no other author); who, describing the Christian assemblies, saith, "We pray there for the emperors, and for their ministers, and for powers, and for the state of the world, for the quiet of things, and for the delay of the end of the world[o]." Which he had declared before more largely, "We pray to the eternal God for the health and safety of the emperors, to the true God, the living God, who made them emperors, and whom it concerns the emperors, above all things, to have propitious to them, &c. To him we look up, and all of us pray always for them, that they may have a long life, a secure empire, a safe family, a valiant army, a faithful senate, &c.[p]"

This was so known a practice, and it was so firmly believed in those days, that the peace and safety, the honour and prosperity of kings and kingdoms, depended very much upon the due performance of this daily service; that there are examples of heathen princes, who had so much faith as to desire to have their safety commended unto God in the prayers of the church. Which were instituted with such a peculiar respect (it appears by St. Paul) to the welfare of princes, the support of

[m] Lib. viii. de Præpar. Evang. sect. viii. [p. 366.]

[n] P. Fagius in Levit. xvi. 17. [inter Critic. Sacr. ad loc. col. 252.]

[o] Apolog. cap. 39. [p. 31 A.]

[p] Ib. cap. 30. [p. 27 A.]

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their government, and the prosperity of their people, that they cannot be neglected without endangering the good estate of the world: and may possibly be one reason why the world hath been so full of disorder and confusion; because Christian people have not applied themselves earnestly enough, in daily public prayers, (which are generally disregarded,) to beseech God for the public good and tranquillity, but are wholly bent to the fulfilling of their own private desires.

V. And as we ought thus to join in prayer, that we may recommend our common concerns to the care of Almighty wisdom and goodness, so likewise that we may, by the common offices of religion, keep ourselves the closer knit together in firm love and unity in the same society. For nothing combines men so strongly as religion: and the purer it is, the greater effect it hath for the stay and support of the commonwealth. Which hath made all lawgivers (as Aristotle observes in his Politics [q]) to exercise their first care about religion: because it is that which qualifies all sorts of men to be serviceable to the public, making "governors (as Mr. Hooker[r], I think, speaks) apter to rule with conscience, and inferiors, for conscience sake, willingly to obey their governors."

It was an admirable saying of Plutarch, in his Discourse against an Epicurean, that "a city may as well be built in the air, without any earth to stand upon, as a commonwealth or kingdom be either constituted or conserved without the support of religion[s]." Take this away, and you take away the foundation on which the kingdom is laid: and it can neither be erected, or, being erected, cannot stand when this is gone. Now as religion is necessary to uphold states and kingdoms, so the public exercise of it is as necessary to uphold religion. Let the public assemblies cease, and religion will not long stand. But we shall soon lose it, if we do not meet together to join in the common offices of it: and we shall soon be tempted to have the

[q] ["Ετι δὲ τὰ πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς φαίνεσθαι ἀεὶ σπουδάζοντα διαφερόντως· ἧττόν τε γὰρ φοβοῦνται τὸ παθεῖν τι παράνομον ὑπὸ τῶν τοιούτων, ἐὰν δεισιδαίμονα νομίζωσιν εἶναι τὸν ἄρχοντα καὶ φροντίζειν τῶν θεῶν, καὶ ἐπιβουλεύουσιν ἧττον ὡς συμμάχους ἔχοντι καὶ τοὺς θεούς.—Arist. Polit. v. 11. §. 24.]

[r] [Eccles. Pol. book v. chap. i. §. 2. vol. ii. p. 14.]

[s] Advers. Coloten. [p. 1125.]

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less concern for one another's safety and happiness, when we are not tied together by the bond of one and the same religion. In which when we heartily join to serve God, it makes us look upon one another as brethren; dear to the same God and Father of us all, and therefore dear to one another.

This the Psalmist represents, when he cries out in the beginning of Psalm cxxxiii, *Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!* He would have all the Israelites to look upon themselves as brethren; being all descended from one and the same stock, and having also the same God for their Father. And then they *dwelt together in unity*, not merely when they lived lovingly, and unanimously pursued the same common interest for the common good, but then especially when they all met in one and the same place, to worship God together, with one heart and with one soul: which linked them closer than any other bond could do, and provided best for their common security. For it appears by what follows, he chiefly aims at this assembling themselves unanimously together, as the words are in the Hebrew, *O how good and pleasant is it for brethren to dwell even together*, i. e. to meet all at God's house, as common to them all. Nothing more delightful than to behold such a general assembly: which he illustrates by two similitudes. First, of the precious ointment, which ran down from the head of the high priest to the very skirt of his garment: and then by the dew of heaven, which made the hill of Hermon and the mountain of Zion (nigh to which the temple stood) exceeding fruitful. And then, in conclusion, he adds the reason why this was so joyful a sight, and so beneficial: *for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.* He pours down his blessings of all sorts (as the heavens do the dew, and as the precious ointment ran down from Aaron's head) upon a people that are thus unanimously joined together in the worship and service of God: who only can make them happy (that is meant by *life*), and can make them so for evermore.

In order to which, he took care his divine service should be perpetually performed in the temple; whither they were to resort to do their duty to him, and to implore his grace and favour towards them. And I cannot think it fell out by chance, that, next to the Psalm now mentioned, is immediately placed a

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solemn exhortation (in Psalm cxxxiv.) unto the ministers of God, to attend constantly upon their duty in the sanctuary, there to *praise the Lord, who made heaven and earth;* and to *give a blessing to his people,* and pray for their prosperity *out of Sion,* as that Psalm concludes.

I end this with the observation of a wise man; that we, being members of a public body, ought to serve it the best we can. Now all the service we do, as members of it, is public service: which is far more worthy than what we act for ourselves privately and distinctly, as much as a whole society exceeds the worth of any one man in it. And what service is there we can do it, like to that of maintaining God's true religion by serious attendance, with due care and frequency, upon the public offices thereof? whereby we shall exceedingly promote the common good of all, and maintain society itself; by which we are kept and preserved in safety and prosperity.

For by doing public honour to God we shall draw down public blessings upon ourselves. God himself will bless us, as the Psalmist speaks, *He will bless them that fear the Lord, both small and great. The Lord shall increase you more and more, you and your children: ye are the blessed of the Lord, that made heaven and earth*[t]. Observe the title he gives himself, *The Lord that made heaven and earth;* and you will not think it suitable to his super-excellent and transcendent Majesty to have his worship confined to your closets, or to your private houses; but make it as public as the heaven and the earth are, which are exposed to the view of all. In that spacious temple of his (as the ancients were wont to call the world, of which the temple at Jerusalem was an imitation) he is to be magnified and praised as openly and with as great multitudes as can possibly meet together; that we may not seem to worship some little petty deity, but the universal Lord of all.

Thus I am fallen upon the argument wherewith I begun, which cannot be too often pressed; and hath a close connexion with this other which I have now handled. For he having formed us to live together in society, and to keep closely united in one body, for our common safety and preservation, teaches

[t] Psalm cxv. 13, 14, 15.

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us thereby to own him as the common Parent of us all; and to contrive the best ways we can whereby we may acknowledge him so to be. And there is no way like this, of meeting together in the greatest multitude that can assemble, to magnify and praise him with one voice for his goodness, and, *declaring the wonders he doth for the children of men*, commend ourselves and all our concerns unto his most powerful protection, *by whom kings reign and princes decree justice*[u]; and therefore he ought to be sought for their guidance and direction, protection and safety, and to be acknowledged, as it is in the collect for our king, to be the "high and mighty, King of kings, Lord of lords, the only Ruler of princes, who from his throne beholds all that dwell on the earth." And they are all (as the prophet most admirably expresses it) *as nothing, less than nothing and vanity*, in comparison with his incomprehensible greatness; who, as that great king Nebuchadnezzar publicly acknowledged, and desired all nations and kingdoms should take notice of it is, is the *high God whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation.*

So he begins the proclamation he caused to be made of his humble devotion to the Divine Majesty; by whom he had been abased as low as the beasts of the earth[w]: after which he tells all the world, *I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou*[x]*?* And then concludes his declaration in this manner, *Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.*

A voice worthy of a king, and worthy to be published throughout all the world; and therefore he made the declaration wherein it was contained to be sent to *all people, nations, and languages, that dwelt on all the earth*[y], that is,

[u] [Prov. viii. 15.] [w] Dan. iv. 2, 3. [x] Ver. 34, 35. [y] Ver. 1.

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throughout all his wide empire, to all the parts of the earth where his authority reached and his words would be reverenced, that they might magnify this great King of heaven and earth together with him.

That was the end of it; and it is one of the most public pieces of devotion that we ever read was performed by any man, arising out of this sense with which he was possessed in those ancient times, that God is to be honoured, blessed and extolled publicly, among and by all people; to whom he thought himself bound to show the signs and the wonders which the most high God had wrought towards him. And, *how great* (saith he) *are his signs, and how mighty are his wonders*[z], he was not able to tell, but made the best and the most ample declaration of them that he could, in this imperial decree, which he caused to be proclaimed every where.

By all which we may easily be convinced in what gross errors two sorts of people live.

First, They who imagine that God may be served as well at home as at the church. Such men neither understand the nature of God, nor the nature of religion, nor their own nature; which teach them quite otherwise; and instruct them also to frequent the public assemblies, where they have opportunity so to do.

Secondly, For that is another palpable error, to think that it is sufficient if we come on the Lord's day to testify that we do not forget God; though all the week beside we take no notice of him, but constantly neglect his public service when we are invited to it, and have leisure to attend it. We forget the many public common blessings we daily need and daily receive, which ought to be as publicly every day implored and acknowledged in our common prayers.

Let the foregoing considerations be duly pondered, and they will persuade you both out of love to God's honour, and out of love to your own good, to join as often as you can your prayers, praises, and thanksgivings with the whole church of God; and to make our assemblies as full as you can, both on the Lord's day and every day of the week. Whereby you would declare your constant dependence on God, and acknowledge how *he daily loadeth you with his benefits*[a], and draw

[z] Ver. 3. [a] [Ps. lxviii. 19.]

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down public blessings in abundance upon the church and kingdom where you live, and do credit to our holy religion, (which, alas, now looks in many places as if it were despised,) and not only do credit to it, but both help to support it and also promote and propagate it; to the honour and praise of the Almighty Lord of heaven and earth, *unto whom be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen*[b].

CHAP. XIV.

The nature of a church requires there should be public prayers.

I PROCEED now to the third head of arguments whereby a Christian should be most of all moved to his duty; and that is, to consider the nature of the church, which both requires public assemblies, and makes the service performed in them far more acceptable than private prayers can be.

And here let it be considered in general, that the very word we translate *church* in the holy scriptures signifies in the Greek language an *assembly;* a company of persons met together and that publicly upon the public business or occasions. The first time but one we meet with this word in the New Testament, it is used in opposition to a single person alone by himself, or to one or two more beside him. *If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: and if he will not hear thee, take one or two more, &c. and if he neglect to hear them, tell it to the church*[c]: that is, to that solemn assembly which sat to judge causes, and unto which was the last resort: so that if he did not hear them, he was to be looked upon *as an heathen man and a publican.* And the truth is, it signifies any sort of assembly or concourse of people, which was among the Gentiles as well as the Jews. For in the xixth of the Acts, when all the city of Ephesus was in an uproar, and ran together into the theatre crying up Diana, this general concourse is thrice called their ἐκκλησία or *assembly. Some cried one thing, some another, for the assembly* (ἐκκλησία) *was confused,* &c[d]. And ver. 39, *If*

[b] [Ephes. iii. 21.] [c] Matth. xviii. 15, 16, 17. [d] Acts xix. 32.

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you inquire of other matters, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly; and ver. 41. *having thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.*

Now this being the very notion of the word *church*, the Christian church which Christ hath called is an assembly of men and women met together to worship God by him, to give him thanks for all his benefits, and to implore his grace and mercy to them and to all the world. It is an assembly or company of men, as much as any other; but our Saviour's kingdom being not of this world, the assembly which he appoints is not to meet for civil ends and purposes, but for religious: and the great thing in all religion is the devout worship of God, and giving him the honour due unto his name: for which the church, i. e. Christian assemblies, being founded, it is a clear demonstration that this worship is not so well performed alone by ourselves as in these assemblies. For here we act most like Christians; that is, like members of the body of Christ, which is his church: with which whosoever doth not join, he is no longer a Christian, because he is not a member of the body of Christ; which is a company joined together to have fellowship with God and one with another in all holy duties; of which prayer, thanksgiving, and praises are the chief. For though there they receive Christian instruction, yet that is not the principal business for which they assemble, as appears by St. Paul's words to Timothy before mentioned[5].

If we could make Christian people sensible of this, they would immediately yield the public worship of God to be that which, of all other, he most designs to have continued in the world; and consequently be most affected towards it and constantly frequent it. And how should they remain insensible of it, if they would but consider duly that it is implied in their being Christians, members of Christ's body, which is his church. Which being nothing else but an assembly of men devoted unto Christ met together for religious worship, they are not a part of it if they do not assemble with it. That is, they are not Christians, nor will any of their private devotions be acceptable unto God, being set in opposition to the public; because they go about to destroy the very body of Christ, which is his church, whose very being consists in assemblies, and not in

[5] 1 Tim. ii. 1.

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separated worship alone by ourselves. Which private worship is then acceptable unto God, when performed by a true member of Christ's body; that is, by one who attends upon the public assemblies, by which he procures acceptance for his secret and private services. Which are so far from being most acceptable, that we cannot reasonably think they are acceptable at all, when they are set in opposition to the other, or when the other is constantly neglected.

If I knew how to make this plainer, I would do it; because it is a matter of great importance, that we may not be guilty of neglecting the public worship of God where it may be enjoyed: for so far as we neglect this, we cut ourselves off from the church, which is the body of Christ. That is, we cease to be Christians, and become bare natural men and women: for Christians are made to worship God together in a body, of which every particular person is a part, which cannot subsist but in conjunction with the rest of the members of that body.

Perhaps this will be better understood by considering how we come to be Christians. Which is not barely by belief in Christ, but by receiving baptism: where, professing faith in him, we are admitted into the Christian society and communion, to partake of those blessings which are bestowed by Christ upon the Christian fellowship. But then we must continue therein, by living like Christians, and particularly by assembling together continually for Christian worship: otherwise we renounce our baptism; which admitted us into a society, and not to act separately by ourselves alone. In which society if any man behave himself so scandalously that he is thrust out of it, he is denied to have communion with them in their prayers all the time he remains so cut off from the church. Which is a demonstration, that to have communion with the faithful in prayer, is the very thing unto which we are admitted by being made Christians: it being the thing of which men are debarred when they are turned out of the Christian society.

For the further manifestation of which great truth, which I have thus explained in general, I shall, in the following chapters, offer several particular considerations, which deserve to be seriously pondered in every Christian's thoughts.

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CHAP. XV.

Our blessed Saviour, the Founder of the church, teaches us this doctrine.

I. And first of all, I desire it may be considered, that our blessed Lord doth plainly suppose this notion of a *church*, that is, of religious assemblies, in the very prayer he taught his disciples. The first words of which being, *Our Father*, not *my* Father, are an indication it was not made for a single person only, but for a company of men, joining together in their petitions to God. Who are put in mind, by this expression, when any of them says this prayer alone by himself, that his prayer is at that time acceptable, because he is a member of the church of Christ, and holds communion with the rest of his Christian brethren. There can be no other reason given why we say, *Our Father*, even in our closets, but that we pray as part of a body, and hope to be heard because we are in union therewith, and not divided from it; and therefore stand bound, as oft as we have opportunity, to communicate with it in prayer, and all other holy offices, when it meets together for that purpose.

II. And therefore we may further observe, that Christ most especially promises his blessed presence in such public assemblies: *For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them*[h]. That he speaks of their being assembled in his name for prayer, appears from the foregoing verse, where he saith, *If two of you agree on earth as touching any thing they shall ask, it shall be done*, &c. And the word *gathered together* shows he speaks of public prayer, such as used to be in the synagogues; unto which the word, in the Greek, alludes. And *two or three* so gathered together are put for any number whatsoever; but rather mentioned than any other greater number, that Christians might not be discouraged, though they could meet but in very small companies, by reason of the difficulties and distresses they laboured under in the beginning of our religion.

[h] Matt. xviii. 20.

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The rule of the synagogue was, (as Dr. Lightfoot[i] and others have observed,) that unless the number of ten persons, who were of years, were gathered together, it was no assembly, nor could there be any prayer. But our Lord would not have his church thus abridged in this high privilege of prayer: knowing (as Mr. Thorndike observes) it might so fall out, that such a number of his disciples could not get together; either because of the persecutions which scattered them abroad, or because there were but few (suppose only *two or three*) as yet converted in a place where the gospel was preached. Who, if they did unanimously agree in common petitions, our Saviour promises should find, notwithstanding their small number, that he would be *present* among them.

That is the blessing promised to their consent and agreement in common prayer. Which is not to be understood as if he would not be present with a good Christian when he prays alone; but the meaning is, that then, when they joined in common prayer, he would be more especially present. For if our Lord Christ have a love to every Christian soul, and delights to have its company, then is he much more pleased with a great number of them, who present themselves together to seek his grace and favour. They are more welcome to him; their company is more lovely; the sight of them more amiable; and they are more beloved of him, and prevail for greater tokens of his love.

And thus all wise Christians, ancient and modern, have understood it. I will name one of later times; for there is no doubt of the ancient. *Conventus vero sacros ad loca condicta et deputata*, &c.; 'but as for sacred assemblies, in places appointed and deputed for that purpose, we have a very great veneration, and highly approve and love them,' *cum nobis conjunctis, Christum magis adesse existimamus:* 'for we believe Christ to be more present with us when we are met in conjunction together.' They are the words of Peter Martyr upon Gen. xxviii. 12[k].

And here it may not be unfit to note, for a fuller explication of this matter, that the greatest blessings have then been be-

[i] Temple Service, c. vii. sect. 3. [Works, vol. ix. p. 68.]
[k] [Fol. 108 a. ed. fol. Heid. 1606.]

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stowed when God's people were at their public prayers: which is a mighty argument to frequent them, in hope then to prevail far more than we can in our private addresses to him. In the Old Testament the examples of it are many; particularly in 2 Kings iii. 9, 10, where you read that the hosts of three kings being ready to perish, both man and beast, for want of water, and the prophet Elisha undertaking to furnish them therewith, *it came to pass in the morning, when the meat-offering was offered*, (which was the time when all the people were at their prayers in the temple,) *there came water by the way of Edom, and the country was filled with water*[l]. Why did it come at this time rather than any other, but to honour the public prayers and sacrifices, and to let them know what great benefits they might receive thereby if devoutly attended?

And when there could be no assemblies at the temple, in the time of their captivity, yet they praying then privately with respect to it, as members of that church, God was pleased to answer their petitions at that very hour, when public prayers had been wont to be made at that place. For it was *about the time of the evening oblation* that the angel Gabriel was caused to fly swiftly to Daniel, as he was *speaking, and praying, and confessing his sin, and the sin of the people Israel, and presenting his supplication before the Lord his God*[m]. And the tidings he brought him were the most joyful that ever had been heard; for they were the very same which the same angel afterwards brought to the blessed Virgin, concerning the birth of our Lord Christ, to lay down his life for us.

And in the New Testament, you may observe, God sent his angel to bring St. Peter out of prison, after a miraculous manner, delivering him *out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews*, while *many were gathered together praying*[n]. We read in ver. 5, that *prayer was made without ceasing* (or instant and earnest prayer was made) *of the church unto God for him*: and in the very time when *many*, that is, the whole church, *were gathered together*, that is, in the time of common prayer, God sent salvation to him. Upon which words St. Chrysostom occasionally reflecting, cries out[o], "If the prayer of the church was so available for

[l] 2 Kings iii. 20. [m] Dan. ix. 20, 21. [n] Acts xii. 12.
[o] Hom. iii. περὶ Ἀκαταλήπτου. [tom. i. pp. 469, 470.]

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Peter; if it rescued him out of prison who was a pillar of the church; how comes it about that thou hast no sense of its power, but despisest it, and settest it at nought by thy neglect of it? What excuse canst thou make for this? especially when, if there be a sermon, we see a crowd of people, and the church as full as it can hold? O, says one, I can pray at home; but I can hear sermons nowhere but in the church. Vain man! thou deceivest thyself. Thou canst indeed pray at home; but thou canst not pray so as thou dost in the church: where there is such a multitude of fathers; where a cry is sent up to God with one accord. Thou wilt not have such audience when thou beseechest the Lord by thyself, as when thou prayest with thy brethren. For there is τὶ πλέον, 'something more' in this; viz. the concord, the conspiration, and harmony of many in the same petition; the bond of charity, and the prayers of the priests: for therefore the priests preside in those assemblies, that the prayers of the multitude, which are weaker, may, by the help of theirs, which are stronger, go together with them into heaven. Add to this; what good doth a sermon do when prayer is not yoked with it? First prayer, and then the word, as the apostles say[p]: *We will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.* Thus St. Paul doth, praying in the preface to his Epistles, that the light of prayer, like a torch, may usher in the word. And if thou didst accustom thyself to pray with exact diligence, thou wouldst less need the instructions of thy fellow-servant, God himself illuminating thy mind without his assistance. And if thou thinkest thy prayer alone to be of such force, how powerful must it be when joined with a multitude! This is far more nervous; and there is greater confidence and assurance in it than in that which is made at home and in private. So St. Paul thought when he said, *he who hath delivered, and doth deliver, we trust will yet deliver us: you also helping together by prayer for us*[q]. So St. Peter also got out of prison; for *earnest prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.*"

[p] Acts vi. 4. [q] 2 Cor. i. 10, 11.

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CHAP. XVI.

Which is further confirmed by the practice of the apostles, and the first Christians.

III. THE next thing I observe is, that according to the direction of our Saviour, and the encouragement he had given them to expect his blessed presence among them, the apostles and the rest of Christ's disciples, immediately upon their Master's ascension into heaven, assembled themselves together for common prayer and supplication. For so we read, Acts i. 12, &c., that as soon as he was gone out of their sight, and the angels had told them whither he was gone, *they returned unto Jerusalem; and when they were come in, they went up into an upper room,* (the place, as shall be shown presently, of Christian worship,) *and all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.*

It was in their assemblies, we read in St. John, where our Saviour often appeared to them presently after his resurrection[s]; and we may well think it was for devotion that they assembled, for it was on the first day of the week. But here we read expressly, after he was ascended into heaven, what they did in those assemblies. In which, there being one day an hundred and twenty met together, they made solemn prayer to God for direction in the choice of a new apostle, to succeed in the room of Judas[t]. But that which is most remarkable you find in the beginning of the next chapter; that when the day of Pentecost was fully come, *they were all with one accord in one place, and suddenly they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with tongues, &c.* This great gift, whereby they were to gather a church in all nations, as they had began to do at Jerusalem and thereabouts, came down upon them when they were met together for the service of God. The *one place* here spoken of being no other than that mentioned before; where *they continued with one accord, in prayer and supplication:* the place where they assembled immediately after his resurrection, as I said just now, and in all likelihood

[s] John xx. 19, 26. [t] Acts i. 15, 24.

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the place where our Lord eat his last supper with them before his passion. They did not look for this promise of our Saviour in their closets, but expected he would be in the midst of them, by the power of the Holy Ghost, when they were met together, to wait upon him for the fulfilling of his word.

IV. And accordingly you may further note, that all they who were converted by them to own Christ Jesus for their Lord and Master, immediately joined themselves to them, to worship God in communion with them. Thus you read, how upon that very day, when they received the Holy Ghost, and preached thereupon unto all they could meet withal the resurrection of Christ in their own language, *as many as received the word* (that is, believed on Christ) *were baptized* (that was the first thing, they were admitted into the church); and the effect of it was this, *they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and breaking of bread, and in prayers*[u]; which is repeated again, *they continued daily with one accord in the temple*, (worshipping God with the Jews,) and then *received the eucharist at home*[x]: which was the proper Christian worship, wherein they joined together in their own assemblies.

And here it is very remarkable, that when their numbers were increased from three to five thousand, and there was a new descent of the Holy Ghost, to enable more besides those on whom it fell at first to preach the word; this descent was at the time of prayer, when they were assembled together for that purpose. Read Acts iv, where you find that the apostles being let go from their imprisonment, they went into their own company[y], and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. Which when the company heard, *they lift up their voice to God with one accord*, and said, *Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is, &c.; grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, &c.*[z] *And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together*, (for prayer you plainly see,) *and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness*[a].

[u] Acts i. 41, 42. [x] Ver. 46. [y] iv. 23. [z] Ver. 24, 25, &c. [a] Ver. 31.

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And as it was at Jerusalem, so in all other places where they settled a church, it was for this purpose, that they should assemble to worship God together by Christ Jesus. This was the very first or principal thing they ordained in such churches; as those words to Timothy, which I have often named, sufficiently testify: *I will therefore that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, &c.*[c] Which assemblies the apostles required Christians not to forsake, no not in times of danger, Heb. x. 25. For that (you may note as I pass along) was to fall off from Christianity, as appears by the following words[d]. For as to become a Christian was to join themselves to the Christian society, in such actions of religion (according to that you read of St. Paul, who being converted, *assayed to join himself to the brethren*[e]; that is, to the assemblies of Christians); so to cease to be thus joined in Christian communion was to cease to be a Christian; and, in effect, to deny Jesus Christ to be their Lord and Saviour: who hath made all that belong unto him to be a church; that is, as I have often said, a company of men and women assembling themselves together for divine offices.

V. And that they might so do there was, it may further be observed, a certain place appointed for their assemblies: because there could be no assemblies but they must be held somewhere or other; and they could not be held with any certainty, unless the place were determined and known to be designed for that purpose. Of this we read so frequently in the holy writings of the New Testament, that it is a wonder any should make a question of it. I mentioned before the *upper room*[f], where the apostles assembled immediately after our Saviour's ascension; which Mr. Mede[g] hath abundantly proved to be the settled place of their holy assemblies. Where, as I said, they were assembled again on the day of Pentecost[h], and the next day after[i], and was the *house* where they are said to have continued daily breaking bread at home[j].

Nor was this peculiar to Jerusalem, but in other cities they

[c] 1 Tim. ii. 1.
[d] Ver. 26.
[e] Acts ix. 26.
[f] Acts i. 11.
[g] Book ii. p. 408, &c. [Works, vol. i. ed. fol. Lond. 1664.]
[h] Acts ii. 1.
[i] iv. 31.
[j] Acts ii. 46.

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had the like. For at Troas also the church was gathered together in an *upper chamber* [k]. And at Corinth [l] the apostle speaks of their coming together *in the church*, and *into one place:* which he distinguishes from their own *home* [m]. And again he speaks of *the whole church coming together into one place* [n]: which was no other but that place where they commonly assembled for divine worship. And so those words of St. Paul to Timothy are to be understood, *I will therefore that men pray every where, &c.* [o] Which is spoken, saith Beza [p], in opposition to assembling only at God's house at Jerusalem: unto which men were no longer confined, but might assemble in any place where there was a house appointed for that purpose. So he expounds those words *every where, omnem locum sacris cœtibus destinatum,* 'every place appointed or set apart for holy assemblies to meet in:' for St. Paul, saith he, speaks of public prayer in the common meeting.

Thus St. Basil, many ages before him, explained the apostle's words [q], in answer to those who urged them to prove that prayer was as well performed any where as in the church. "No such matter; these words, *in every place*, do not comprehend such places as are employed in common uses and in profane or perhaps filthy affairs, ἀλλὰ πλατύνει ἀπὸ τῆς περιγραφῆς τῆς Ἱερουσαλὴμ, &c., 'but enlarge the service of God beyond the compass of Jerusalem,' unto any place in the world, which (according to the prophecy about sacrifice) is reverently devoted unto God, for the sacred performance of the glorious mystery."

And that these places thus designed for holy assemblies were separated from common use, and set apart only for this, was never doubted till this last age of fancy and vain conceit. Which hath imagined the separation of places to divine service only, to be a mere legal institution: that is, ordained merely by the law of Moses; which made the tabernacle, and afterward the temple, such an holy place. Whereas they were so made in conformity to the common notions of human nature: and only made more holy and separate than any other place by the residence of a visible majesty and glory there. Other-

[k] Acts xx. 8.
[l] 1 Cor. xvi. 18, 20. [m] Ver. 34.
[n] Ver. 23. [o] 1 Tim. ii. 8.
[p] [Nov. Test. cura Theod. Bezæ, &c. p. 630. fol. Cant. 1642.]
[q] L. 2. de Baptismo, Resp. ad Q. viii. [tom. ii. p. 662 B.]

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wise there were holy, that is, separated places, before that time, (though not so separate or holy as the temple was,) and will be always to the end of the world: unless we suppose that men will lose all reverence to God, and let him have nothing among us which may be peculiarly called his own.

Now this thing alone is an argument for public worship, that there hath always been a place appointed for divine service: which would have been needless, if men were not bound to assemble together to worship God; for then it might have been left to every one's liberty where they would please to do it themselves.

And this also shows the advantage which public worship hath of all other. For being performed in a place set apart for it, where nothing else is done, at our very entrance into it we are naturally put in mind of God, and of our business there, which is only with him: and so shall be more apt to be composed there than in any other place, which we are wont to employ about other things besides the worship of God. Especially since all wise men have ever endeavoured that the service of God should be there performed with the most solemnity and majesty that could be contrived; nay, that the place itself should not be mean, but rather stately, and gravely adorned. For it is not with public prayer, as it is with private. "In private," as Mr. Hooker judiciously observes [p], "secresy is commended, rather than outward show: whereas public prayer, being the act of the whole society, requires accordingly more care to be had of external appearance. And therefore the very assembling of men unto this service hath ever been very solemn; and the very outward form of the place of public prayer hath been ever thought a circumstance of great moment to help devotion."

VI. To this may be further added, from one of the texts now mentioned, that the apostle directs how they should exercise their spiritual gifts in the holy place where they met together; and particularly the gift of Prayer [q]. There were a great many extraordinary gifts then bestowed upon the Corinthian church; every one of which, the apostle informs them, was bestowed by one and the same Spirit, and bestowed by him *to profit*

[p] [Eccles. Pol. book v. chap. 25. vol. ii. p. 118.] [q] 1 Cor. xiv. 23.

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withal[r]; that is, for the public benefit of the church. And among the rest, there was a gift of prayer, which was upon some occasions afforded by a particular inspiration of the Holy Ghost: and designed, as every one beside were, for the common good of all the faithful.

For if any man wanted the faculty of expressing those pious thoughts which the Spirit suggested to him in the common language, which everybody understood, the apostle shows his gift was of small value; and directs such a man to pray that he might be able *to interpret*[s], into a language, that is, which was commonly understood. The reason of which was, because then his gift of prayer would be of general use in the public assemblies: the advantage of which was to be preferred before any man's private benefit. So he tells them in the verse foregoing, that they who were zealous of spiritual gifts should *seek that they might excel to the edifying of the church*[t]. And in the verses following[u] he saith, that *if he himself should pray in an unknown tongue, his spirit* indeed *prayed*, (that is, the spiritual gift which he had was therein exercised,) but his *understanding was unfruitful:* that is, others received no benefit by it, because they understood not what he said. And therefore he puts this question, *What is it then?* that is, what is it that we should desire in this business of prayer? which he resolves thus, *I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also.* That is, this is most to be desired, when I, or any other, hath a prayer suggested to him by the Spirit, that we may be able, not only to utter what it inspires, but to understand it also ourselves so far as to make others understand it, by putting it into known and intelligible words. This is certainly best, not merely to have conceptions formed in us by the Spirit, but to utter those conceptions in such familiar and common expressions that others may be profited by them. *Else*, saith he, *when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that is unlearned say Amen*[x]*?* That is, how shall he that understands not what thou sayest, because it is uttered in a strange language, give his consent and join with thee in those petitions and thanksgivings, though in themselves never so holy and good?

[r] 1 Cor. xii. 7. [s] xiv. 13. [t] Ver. 12. [u] Ver. 14, 15. [x] Ver. 16.

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which the people did at the end of the prayers by saying *Amen*, 'So be it.'

Which words are a demonstration he speaks of prayer in public, or common prayer. Which, from hence it is evident, was then in greatest esteem; because, in comparison with this, the apostle undervalues even an extraordinary gift of prayer, which a private person had, whereby he alone was profited. He prayed well; but others not being edified thereby, because they understood not what he said, it was a great diminution of its worth, and made it of less price in the apostle's account. And we all agree he had the Spirit of God, and could as well judge what was best as what was good. Now this was best in his judgment, to have the prayer made public; that all might join in it, and not remain merely a private good.

And indeed that Spirit (it may be noted under this head) which enlivens the whole body of the church, moves every member of it unto this, to join in its common offices for the service of the whole. Which it is the very scope of the apostle to demonstrate in those three chapters, xii, xiii, xiv. of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, that they ought in every thing to act as members of a body, seeking the improvement one of another by the exercise of all their gifts, not separately, but conjunctly, so that all might partake of the benefit. And whosoever he is that hath any sense of such a thing as the body of Christ, whereof he is one member; he will never think that what he doth alone is as good as what he performs in fellowship with the rest of the members. No, if he say the same prayers, and offer the same praises in private which the church offers in public, he cannot reasonably think there is no difference, nor imagine that both alike are God's service; because what he doth in conjunction with the rest of the body is most agreeable to God's holy Spirit; by which this body is linked together, and every part of it moved to act for the good of the whole.

I conclude this with the words of Mr. Thorndike[y]; "To imagine that prayers at home will be as acceptable to God as those made in the church with our brethren, is as if one should have fancied that the incense of the temple, spoken of Psalm cxli. 1, (which was a compound of several precious gums,) made

[y] Relig. Assembl. p. 173. [Works, vol. i. p. 213.]

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no other perfume than the spices would have done, had they been burnt one by one."

CHAP. XVII.

Other considerations to strengthen this argument.

VII. God hath also appointed a public order of men to direct and govern Christian assemblies, and to minister therein; both by giving Christian instruction, and by offering up the common prayers of the church to God, and blessing the people in his name.

This is another convincing argument both that Christ designed public assemblies, because he hath appointed public ministers to officiate there; and that the prayers made there are to be preferred before private devotions, because there we partake of the service of God's ministers; the benefit whereof we lose, if we content ourselves with what we do at home.

There is nothing more apparent in the holy writings than that our Lord would have such an order of men set apart for his Divine service in the church. Whose ordination by his special appointment and designation is an assurance that their ministry therein is acceptable to God, as well when they offer the people's prayers to him, and bless them in his name, as when they deliver his word to the people, and teach them both how to pray and to perform all other duties of a Christian life. Both of these are necessary, and their office is designed for both: but especially for the first; to minister the Divine service of the church. The principal of which is the Eucharist; wherein they dispense the most precious tokens of Christ's love to his body, the church: by prayers and by thanksgivings to God for the redemption of the world by that death of Christ upon the cross. Which ought to be publicly celebrated, because it is an annunciation of the Lord's death, wherein we publish and show it forth till he come: and never was administered, nor can be, by any other persons but those whom our Lord hath entrusted to be *stewards of his mysteries.*

For whose prayers and public service in the church if men have not a great esteem; it is because they have no religion,

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or no true knowledge thereof. For if they believed that God hath any ministers (as he hath, if there be any such thing as religion) who are peculiarly sanctified, that is, set apart for his service, they would believe that God conveys some blessings by their ministry; and look upon their ordination as a seal that he who hath thereby appointed them to be instruments of his for the salvation of men's souls will by these instruments effect the thing whereunto he hath ordained them: and particularly give men his blessing by their means, and accept those prayers which these servants of his offer up unto him for them, and in their name.

For that praying for the people is a special part of their work, we may learn from St. James v. 14, where he directs those to whom he writes, when any man was sick, to *send for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him.* Which no less belonged to their office, we may be sure, when men were well, than when they were sick; being a part of their daily ministration for the whole body of the church. Whose weaker prayers, as I noted before out of St. Chrysostom, being helped by the stronger prayers of God's ministers, go up to heaven together with them.

All Christians indeed are called *a holy and a royal priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Christ Jesus*[z]: but it is manifest by these very words that they are not so singly, but in a body; when they pray and give thanks together with him that ministers the Divine service in the church, the *spiritual house* of which the apostle there speaks; in which spiritual sacrifices were offered up to God. And since sacrifices were offered only in public in the place God appointed for them; we may thence, I think, conclude, that our prayers, praises, and thanksgivings are then only sacrifices when made in our assemblies; and that then we act as priests unto God, and not at other times.

The principal sacrifice of Christians, I am sure, is in its own nature a public service; and is to be so esteemed, even when it is administered to the sick in private; who receive it as part of that body which is supposed continually to offer this sacrifice. I mean the Holy Communion, wherein we offer to

[z] 1 Pet. ii. 5, 9.

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God, with prayers, praises, and thanksgivings, a commemoration of the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross for us. For this we ought all to meet as frequently as we can, that we may conjunctly and openly acknowledge this benefit; because, though this be the principal and immediate intention of this action, it hath respect also to that communion which we have one with another, as mutual members; and with Christ our Head, as his body. So the apostle teacheth us, when he saith, *The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread*[a]. And therefore, since we are not members of the same body, unless we be knit together in one; and we are not knit together in one, but by the communion of the body and blood of Christ; and we cannot have that communion but by assembling together to eat of one bread, and drink of one cup: it is manifest to all that there is the greatest necessity of public assemblies, where this is the chief business for which Christians should meet together in one body as oft as is possible; and at all other times beseech God to accept their sacrifices for the sake of that perfect sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction which Christ hath made, and which we commemorate.

Here also, in the public assemblies, censures were inflicted upon public offenders, as we learn from the apostle[b], as well as from Tertullian, in his Apology[c]: and many such like things I might add to the same purpose if I had room for them, and had not other material considerations to press, which ought not to be omitted.

VIII. Among which this is not inconsiderable, that the public service of the church, by them ministered, is so acceptable unto God, that the angels, God's heavenly ministers, attend in such holy assemblies, and make a part of them. For this is the reason St. Paul gives why a woman should cover her head in time of prayer, that is, be in a humble and reverend posture, *because of the angels*[d]. Whose presence in the assemblies of

[a] 1 Cor. x. 16, 17. [b] 1 Cor. v. 4. [c] Cap. xxxix. [p. 31 A.]
[d] 1 Cor. xi. 10.

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Christians is a token of Christ's blessed presence in the midst of them: according to his own promise before mentioned [e]. For "where the angels are said to be, there God is present;" as the Hebrews observe, and not without good ground for what they say. For when Jacob saw angels in a vision ascending and descending upon a ladder, which stood on the earth, and reached unto heaven, he said, as soon as he was awake, *How dreadful is this place!* (that is, with what reverence should I behave myself here!) *this is no other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.* He concludes God to be present, because the angels were, who are his ministers and attendants. And accordingly we are to understand these words of the apostle as intended to signify a divine presence among us, when we are reverently assembled together to worship God in his holy places.

Which the ancient Christians looked upon as a singular encouragement to attend upon the public prayers; because then a Christian prays with the angels, ὡς ἂν ἤδη καὶ ἰσάγγελος, (they are the words of Clemens Alexandrinus [f],) 'as already, especially at that time, equal even to an angel;' and will not be out of the precinct of those holy guardians when he prays alone, but then also have their company. Of which Origen hath a set discourse in his Book of Prayer lately published [g]; where, mentioning the words of the Psalmist, among others, *The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, &c.*, he thus proceeds; "It is probable that when many are assembled together sincerely to the glory of Christ, the angel of every one of them there pitcheth his tent, together with him that is committed to his charge and custody; so as to make διπλῆν ἐκκλησίαν, 'a double church,' where the saints are gathered together; one church of men, and another church of angels."

But if there were nothing of this in it, yet the communion of saints here on earth (which is an article of our creed) should invite us unto the public service. For how do we maintain communion with them, if we join not with those among whom

[e] Matt. xviii. 20. [f] Lib. vii. Strom. p. 746. [cap. 12. p. 879. ed. Potter.] [g] Part. 2da, num. 20. [§. 31. tom. i. p. 269 A.]

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we live in the assemblies of the saints? that is, of Christians, who are all a holy people to the Lord, by their solemn dedication to him in their baptism, and by their holy profession, and meeting together continually for holy offices. Which if any man forsake, he is no longer holy, but profane; renouncing so far the Christian faith, which teaches him to keep the communion of saints, by having fellowship with them in prayer, especially in the Eucharist, which is the communion of Christ's body and blood. By partaking of which, we have the nearest communion also one with another: being made one body, as I have said already, by partaking all of that one bread[h].

Communion indeed, or *fellowship*, is in one place made a thing distinct from *breaking of bread* and prayers[i], and signifies, some think, communicating to each other's necessities. Which notion of communion if we understand to be meant in the creed, it makes no less to my purpose than the other. For we must consider that this was done in their public assemblies: whereby their communicating to the needs of their brethren became an acceptable offering unto God, together with their prayers. This we learn from 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2, where St. Paul speaks of the collections for the saints as a part of the business of the first day of the week, both there and in the churches of Galatia. When they did not forget this well-pleasing *sacrifice*, (as it is called Heb. xiii. 16,) but acknowledged God's bounty to themselves by the relief they sent to others, and by such a public contribution maintained also a sense and fellow-feeling of one another's condition, and made a profession that they all belonged to one and the same body, though never so far distant one from another. The sense of which we are apt to lose, when we join not together in such actions of piety. Whereby brotherly love and kindness is likewise nourished, and we are knit together in the tenderest affection: while we look upon one another, not only as children of the same common Father, but as limbs of the same body. Who naturally *have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it*[k].

In this brotherly love, and in the same faith, some think the

[h] 1 Cor. x. 17. [i] Acts ii. 42. [k] 1 Cor. xii. 25, 26.

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unity of the body of Christ entirely consists. But they should consider that this brotherly love and care flows from the unity of Christ's body: which consists therefore in the conjunction of every member with the rest, and keeping communion one with another, in all the common offices of religion in Christian assemblies. From which whosoever departs, or refuses to join therein, he breaks the unity of the body of Christ, which is his church. And though he do the same thing alone which is done in those assemblies, yet it is not the same thing in the account of Christ; who looks upon such a man as gone from him, by going from his body, the church.

X. I will add one thing more, which is, that the service of God, in the church triumphant in heaven, is a public service: and they do not worship God separately there, but join together in his praises. This we are taught by St. John[1]; where, after a great multitude had been represented to him, which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds and tongues, who stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, crying with a loud voice, and saying, *Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb,* (whereby no doubt is signified the service of the Christian church,) then it follows, that *all the angels also stood round about the throne, and about the elders, and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen. Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God, for ever and ever.* They said, that is, *Amen* to the Christian service; and also added their own, giving glory to God in one body, (for it is the voice of *all angels,*) as the Christian church did.

Let this be seriously pondered, and we shall endeavour to approach as near unto them as we can; by joining, as they do, in one society of the church to worship God. For so doing, we join ourselves to the society also of the holy angels; as the angels, St. John here informs us, do to the society of Christian worshippers. They and we make but one body in Christ; in whom God *hath gathered together in one all things, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth;* and this unity

[1] Rev. vii. 11.

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consists, it is manifest by this vision of St. John, in their communion one with another in holy offices: which the church in heaven (where it is become most perfectly one) doth most sacredly keep and preserve.

CHAP. XVIII.

A recapitulation of the four foregoing chapters, with some inferences from thence.

LAY now all these things together; that the church in the very notion of it is an assembly of men and women called to meet together; and therefore the Christian church is such an assembly, called to join together in worshipping God by Christ Jesus; who himself hath supposed this in the prayer he gave his disciples, and hath promised his special presence in such assemblies; which the apostles constantly held, and there received the first and best fruits of his love, in the descent of the Holy Ghost; which drew all converts every where into the same blessed conjunction; for which holy places were appointed, where they constantly assembled, and where the extraordinary gift of prayer was to be made common, or else looked upon as of little value; where God hath appointed his ministers to attend, and there offer up the prayers of his people, and bless them in his name; where the angels also are present, and delight to see us assembled, that we may maintain the communion of saints here on earth, and be fitted for the company of the blessed in heaven; who all join together in giving blessing, and praise, and honour unto him whom we worship; who is far *exalted above all blessing and praise*, either of ours on earth, or of theirs in heaven: consider, I say, all this, and then think what an error they live in who make little or no account of the public assemblies, but imagine they can pray and serve God as well by themselves alone. This is a most unchristian thought, directly contrary to the very frame of our holy religion; which therefore ought, with all diligence, to be exploded out of every one of our minds.

As for those who do not barely neglect the public service, but refuse to join in it, they are still in a far worse condition:

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having broken themselves off from the body of Christ; which the ancient church thought so heinous a crime, that they looked upon their prayers as an abomination. For so I find in the council of Antioch [m], that such Christians were condemned as, going into any private house, prayed together with those who would not join in the prayers of the church. None of the church were to join in their prayers: if any did, they thought it equal to the crime of communicating with excommunicated persons. The like I find in the council of Laodicea [n]: and the canons ascribed to the apostles speak to the same purpose [o]. And this sentence of those councils is very conformable to the sense of the ancient Jews, whose maxim this was (as Mr. Thorndike observes [p]): "He that dwells in a city where there is a synagogue, and prays not there with the congregation, this is he who is called a bad neighbour." And well may he be called bad, who will have no society in the best things; who cuts himself off by his own act from the congregation of the Lord; who will not afford his neighbours the help of his prayers; who lives as if the world could be governed without taking any notice of God the supreme Governor; who directly overthrows the Christian religion, and destroys the very notion of a church; who hath no regard to holy places, and slights God's ministers; who withdraws himself from God's special presence and protection, and defies all the blessed company of heaven. Among whom he can never hope to find any entertainment, nor to be received into the celestial habitations: having shut himself here out of the society of saints, and the place where God's honour dwelleth.

Would to God such things as these were seriously and deeply considered by us all, that our minds might be awaked to a diligent and constant attendance upon the public assemblies. Which our Lord hath taken the greatest care to establish, and unto which he hath also granted very high privileges; lest they should fall into contempt or neglect through men's idleness, or covetousness, or conceitedness, or by any other means whatso-

[m] Canon. 2. [Mansi, Concill. tom. ii. col. 1309 A.]

[n] Can. 33. [Mansi, tom. ii. col. 569 C.]

[o] Can. 10. [al. 7. Coteler. Patr. apost. tom. i. p. 443.]

[p] Relig. Assembl. p. 173. [Works, vol. i. p. 213.]

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ever. Certain it is, if we had an hearty love to our religion and understood it, we could not but be so in love with the public exercises of it, as every day, if it lay in our power, to go into God's house, and there recommend ourselves and his whole church to his grace and mercy. For there is no way, it is evident from what hath been said, to uphold and support the church like to this: we being a church by meeting together, to have communion in the same prayers. Which the oftener we have the more we look like a church, and act like members of the body of Christ; who are combined and knit together for mutual preservation. As, on the contrary, the seldomer we meet the less there is of the face of a church among us; which cannot be preserved from ruin, when the public assemblies are generally neglected, because the church falls to decay by that very neglect.

Let us therefore set ourselves to maintain the church of which we are members, by maintaining public assemblies, and suffering no day to pass without a solemn meeting, in as full a body as we can make, for the duties of our religion. This would be both an ornament, and a strength, and establishment to our religion. The truth which we profess would hereby be both honoured and confirmed; and appear with greater authority, as well as beauty, in the eyes of all its adversaries, when they beheld the multitude, the unanimity, and the order and constancy of those that assert it. The better and gentler sort of them would be the more easily won to join with us; and they whose hearts are alienated from us would be the less inclined to set themselves against us.

And for the grace and favour of God, which is the chief thing of all, Christians may promise it to themselves for their protection against all their adversaries, when they constantly and earnestly seek it with their joint prayers and supplications. Which will be powerful also for the settling such as are wavering in their religion: whom the constant authority likewise of a great number of faithful people cannot but be of much moment to contain in their duty; for men are ashamed to forsake a multitude, when they easily desert small numbers.

The ancient Christians were so possessed with this sense, that they looked upon their prayers as "the impregnable bulwark of the church, an unshaken garrison; terrible to the

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devils, and salutary to God's pious worshippers[q]." Insomuch that St. Basil, speaking of God's gathering the waters together, which he called seas, *and saw it was good*[r], falls into a pious meditation, how much more acceptable to him such a collection or gathering together of the church must needs be, "in which the mixed sound of men, women and children, making a noise like the waves dashing against the shore, is sent up to God in prayers. A profound calm and tranquillity shall preserve such a church unmovable. The spirit of wickedness shall have no power to trouble it with heretical doctrines[s]." By which passage we learn, both how full their assemblies were wont to be, and that the prayers were understood by all the people, who with one voice said the same that the priest did, (as we now do in our general confession,) and that they hoped for great security from their common supplications to God for his watchful providence over them.

And thus our own church, in the second collect for morning prayer, by teaching us to look upon our "eternal life" as "standing in the knowledge of God," and to esteem his "service to be perfect freedom," enforces our resort unto him continually for our defence in that service and knowledge, "in all assaults of our enemies." The effect of which it instructs us to hope will be this, "that we, surely trusting in his defence, may not fear the power of any adversaries, through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord." This St. Chrysostom admirably represents, as his manner is, in a sermon upon an ancient martyr[t]: "A man that always stands upon a rock laughs the waves to scorn: so he that enjoys the daily prayers and is moistened with the divine words, having seated himself as upon the rock of a right judgment of things, will be carried away with nothing here; being raised aloft out of the reach of all the affairs of this life. And that not only from the good admonitions he daily receives, but from the prayers and from the paternal benediction, and from the common convention, and from the love of the brethren, and from abundance of other things, reaping

[q] Τῆς ἐκκλησίας τεῖχος ἀρραγὲς, &c. Chrysost. tom. i. p. 757. edit. Fr. D. [al. De Precatione, hom. ii. tom. ii. ed. Ben. p. 789 A.]

[r] Gen. i. 16.

[s] In Hexaemeron, Hom. iv. sub fin. [tom. i. p. 39 E.]

[t] Hom. in S. Lucianum, tom. i. [tom. ii. ed. Ben. p. 525.]

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much benefit and spiritual consolation, he goes home laden with a thousand blessings," insomuch that a bride, in his opinion, "is not so beautiful and amiable when she sits in her bridal chamber, as a soul is wonderful and glorious when it appears in the church breathing forth spiritual graces:" which he compares to fragrant ointments. "For he that is conversant there with faith and diligence carries away innumerable treasures: and though never so many dreadful things befall him, he will bear them all easily; being sufficiently furnished out of the holy Scriptures with patience and philosophy." He means the wise thoughts which the belief of the gospel puts into us.

For which reason it was that the enemies of our religion bent their forces not so much against particular persons as against their assemblies: which they endeavoured with all their might to destroy, as the nurseries of the Christian faith. Which being dispersed, they doubted not but the faith itself would be lost in that disorder. They no longer looked upon Christians as a church when they did not meet together, but as so many scattered limbs of a body, which no longer subsists when the members are distracted and torn asunder. Against these strongholds therefore they laid their batteries; hoping when they were beaten down they should presently triumph over their religion: which they knew it was hard to overcome, whilst a great body of men remained knit together continually for its support, by many bonds and holy mysteries, and the strictest sacraments.

For which cause likewise it was that Christian people could not be persuaded to omit their assemblies; no, not in time of persecution, when there was the greatest danger if they held them. We learn so much from their very persecutors; particularly from the famous letter which Pliny wrote to the emperor Trajan about this matter: wherein we are informed, that when it was not safe in the day time, they met before the morning light to sing hymns to Christ as their God [u]. To what shall we impute this zeal? Might they not have served God as well alone? No, they understood their religion better than to be of that opinion; and knew it could not stand if they did not thus join together to uphold it. Their enemies, they knew, wished for nothing

[u] [Lib. x. Epist. 97.]

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more than that these assemblies might be broken: which, whilst they continued, were *the pillar and stay* of the Christian truth.

And do we pretend to be Christians, and to love our religion, and to desire, nay hope for its safety and prosperity; and make so little account of these holy assemblies, that the smallest matter will hinder our attendance on them? Let us not, against the clearest demonstrations, persist in such a stupid error: but awaken, or rather inflame ourselves unto such a degree of zeal, as to meet together daily where we have opportunity for it; to give glory to God in his church by Christ Jesus; and to commend his church, as well as ourselves and families, to the protection of his good providence, saying, "O Lord, save thy people, and bless thine inheritance." It cannot be imagined what satisfaction we should find herein, did we make this our most serious business; and, instead of the excuses we now make for our negligence, give all diligence thus to adorn, confirm, and secure our most holy religion.

It cannot be denied indeed that this hath been an error of long standing: for when the church had rest from persecution, her children began, by degrees, to grow remiss and wanton. Prosperity and ease corrupted them; and they cooled so much in their first love, that many of them came but seldom to do their duty unto God their Saviour. But this was an extreme great grief to their pastors; and brought the heaviest calamities upon Christian people. Hear how the often-named father bewails this[u], "that the church having brought forth many children, she could not enjoy their company every time they assembled to remember our Saviour, but only upon a festival. When you are all full of joy to-day, I alone am full of sorrow, and grieved at heart, to think that the church, which now hath such multitudes in it, will to-morrow be empty. O how great spiritual exultation, how great joy, how great glory to God, how great profit to souls would there be, if every time we assemble we could behold the church as full as it is at this solemn time! Do you not see how the mariners and pilots, when they are upon the sea, labour all they can to get into their port? And we, on the contrary, love to be tossed up and down in the

[u] S. Chrysost. de Baptism. Christi, Hom. xxiv. tom. 1. [tom. ii. ed. Ben. p. 367.]

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sea of this world; engaging ourselves in innumerable secular affairs, which so take up all our thoughts and our time, that here we appear scarce once or twice in the whole year. Are ye ignorant that, as God made havens in the sea, so he hath made churches in cities; that, flying from the tumult, or tempest rather, of secular affairs, we may here enjoy the greatest tranquillity? And for this I may appeal to all your own consciences, whether you find not here such quiet and peace, that you may truly call the church the spiritual haven of the soul. For anger here gives no disturbance (the storms of passion cease); lust doth not inflame; envy doth not gnaw; pride puffs not up; nor doth the love of vainglory corrupt; but all these wild beasts are tamed, as by a divine charm, as soon as the hearing of the holy Scriptures enters, at every man's ears, into his soul, and lays all these unreasonable passions asleep. Who then will not judge them to be miserable wretches that, when they might be partakers of such great wisdom and grace, will not gather themselves together continually, and come to the common mother of us all, I mean the church? For what more necessary business canst thou pretend? What more gainful meeting? Or what should hinder thee from letting us here have thy company?"

This is a lesson he repeats very often, particularly in a sermon he preached a little after Whitsuntide[x], where he complains that he had "in vain persuaded them, at the last solemn assembly, to continue in their Father's house; not merely appear there on a festival, and then leave it." And therefore desires his constant auditors, that they would try to reduce their neighbours, by representing to them, that "though Pentecost were gone, yet the festival was not gone therewith. For every holy meeting," saith he, "is a feast; as appears from the words of Christ himself: *Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.* When Christ is in the midst of those who are assembled, what other demonstration, greater than this, would we have of a festival? Where there is the sacred doctrine and prayer; where the benedictions of fathers, and the hearing of the holy laws; where the meeting together of brethren, and the bond of sin-

[x] Hom. v. de Anna, tom. ii. [tom. iv. ed. Ben. pp. 739, 40.]

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cere love and charity; where converse with God, and God speaking to men; how can there choose but be a festival, and a day of public rejoicing? For not the multitude, but the virtue of those that are gathered together makes a festival; not the fine clothes, but the ornaments of piety; not a rich table, but careful provision for the soul. The greatest feast is a good conscience: and therefore we may keep a feast every day, if we will exercise virtue; if we will purify the conscience. For in what doth the late great festival differ from this day, but only in tumult and noise, and in nothing else? For to-day you may enjoy the holy mysteries, and partake of other spiritual benefits, viz. prayer, hearing, blessings, charity, and all other things, and therefore it is as good a day as any."

CHAP. XIX.

Of daily public assemblies, and of hours and gestures of prayer.

IT may be thought perhaps by some, that I go too far in pressing a daily attendance upon the public prayers; which they imagine is but a superfluous piece of devotion, a great deal more than needs: but if they would lay a very few things together, and consider them seriously, they would alter their opinion.

First, let it be considered that there was anciently a morning and an evening sacrifice every day publicly offered to God at the temple: which was called the *continual burnt offering*, ordained by him on mount Sinai[y]. Secondly, that such sacrifices were acknowledgments to God, and prayers for the obtaining his favour, as appears by 1 Sam. xiii. 12. Thirdly, that the reiterated precepts of the gospel, which require us to *pray alway*, and to *pray without ceasing*, were never thought by any Christian to signify less than praying as oft as the Jews offered sacrifice; that is, morning and evening, which may, with propriety enough, be called *praying continually*,

[y] Numb. xxviii. 3, 6; Exod. xxix. 42.

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or *without ceasing*, as those morning and evening sacrifices at the temple were called the *continual burnt offering*. And fourthly, that no reason can be given why those sacrifices were publicly offered, which will not make it as necessary that we should have public prayers; which are most for the honour of God, I have proved before, and every way most advantageous to us: and then we can make no other conclusion but this, that morning and evening prayer ought every day to be offered to God in our public assemblies; and that we ought to be glad of the opportunity to join therein, as the people did with the priest who ministered in the temple. For when he was in the sanctuary, at the altar of incense, praying, *the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense*[z].

All the people of the land indeed could not possibly come thither every day to worship; but they had their synagogues in the country, where, at the time of morning and evening sacrifice, they met together to pray, and hear the law of God read to them. And a certain number of men were likewise appointed from among them, whom they called stationary men[a], to attend constantly in their courses at the temple, in the name of the rest, whom they represented. Which things considered, we cannot think it fit to have no assemblies but only on the Lord's day: especially when we observe that the ancient prophets expressly say there should be as frequent devotion in the days of Christ as there had been in former times. So we read in that famous prophecy[b], *Prayer shall be made for him* (or *to him*) *continually*, (a plain allusion to the *continual burnt offering*,) *and daily shall he be praised*. Which that it is meant of public prayers and praises is evident, from the *offerings* which it is there said shall be brought to him; and from the effect hereof in the 17th verse: *His name shall be continued for ever, and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed*. Thus the Chaldee paraphrast understood those words, ver. 5: *They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations;* that is, saith he, they shall in all ages "pray before thee, (which is

[z] Luke i. 10, 11, 13.

[a] Dr. Lightfoot, Temple Service, c. vii. sect. 3. [Works, vol. ix. p. 66.]

[b] Ps. lxxii. 15.

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comprehended in the *fear of God*, whereby is often meant his worship and service,) with the sun, and before, or in the presence of the moon[b]." As much as to say, in the morning when the sun arises, and again at night when the moon shines, they shall by devout prayers express their reverence to him, the King of the world.

Where people indeed in country villages lie scattered one from another, and have abundance of business which call them several ways, it cannot be expected that there should be every day such assemblies. But in cities, and in market towns, where they live nearer together, and have, on most days, a great deal of leisure, (which, to my knowledge, is spent by many people there in mere idleness or pleasure,) it is of absolute necessity, if we will do our duty completely to God our Saviour, that assemblies should be maintained and frequented, as they anciently were, and still are in most parts of the Christian world. For the apostles of Christ, immediately upon his ascension into heaven, persisted in the ancient practice of public devotion, being *continually* (i. e. at morning and evening prayer) *in the temple, praising and blessing God*[c]. And after, by the power of the Holy Ghost coming on them, they had settled churches, we read, the *four living creatures and the twenty-four elders* (by which are certainly meant the governors of the Christian church) *rested not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty*[d], &c.; that is, morning and evening they fell down before God, and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever. Which practice hath ever since continued in the church; which, in that heavenly hymn, commonly ascribed to St. Ambrose, hath constantly said, "Day by day we magnify thy name."

For which end certain hours, as well as a certain place, have been always appointed, that men might so order their other affairs as to be able to mind this great business; of giving thanks and praise to God, the Creator of all, and imploring his blessing on them in their several callings and conditions, and on their church and country, and finally on the whole world. It is so sure that the Jews had such set hours of prayer, that I do not think fit to say much of a matter so well known. I will

[b] [Walton, Bibl. Polyglott. tom. iii. p. 196.]

[c] Luke xxiv. 53.

[d] [Rev. iv. 8.]

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only note, that they were the third hour, the sixth, and the ninth. Which the Christian church afterward observed, and that from the example of the apostles themselves. For St. Peter even, when he was not at Jerusalem, went *up to the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour*, i. e. twelve o'clock. Which we cannot doubt was his usual custom; and as little doubt that it was the custom of the other apostles, and by them everywhere propagated throughout all the churches. Which, the ancient writers of Christianity tell us, observed those very set hours of prayer: so Clemens in his Constitutions[e], vii. 24, and Clemens Alexandrinus in lib. vii. of his Stromata[f], where he calls them τάκτας ὥρας, 'the set, appointed hours.' And Tertullian in his book of Fasting, chap. x.[g] Origen also in his Book of Prayer, proves from several Scripture examples that it ought not to be made less than three times every day, n. 38.[h] And such was the practice in St. Chrysostom's days, I shall have occasion to show in the end of this chapter: which is still continued in our great churches every where. I will here only transcribe the words of St. Hierome upon Dan. vi. 10.[i] "There are three times in which our knees ought to be bowed to God, at the third hour, the sixth, and the ninth, as the ecclesiastical tradition instructs us. At the third hour the Holy Ghost descended upon the apostles, at the sixth Peter went up to pray in the upper chamber: and at the ninth, Peter and John went up together into the temple."

Whether the public service of God was every where celebrated three times a day, or only upon the Lord's day, and in great cities every day, may justly be questioned. And I incline to think it was not every day in all places celebrated more than twice: because the Constitutions ascribed to the apostles (which are undoubtedly very ancient) enjoin no more but morning and evening prayer. The words are very remarkable, directed to the bishop; to whom they say[k], "Command and

[e] [Coteler. Patr. Apost. tom. i. p. 373.]
[f] [Cap. vii. p. 854.]
[g] [P. 549.]
[h] [§. 12. tom. i. p. 216 A.]
[i] [Tom. v. col. 659 C.]
[k] Lib. ii. Constit. 59. [Διδάσκων δὲ, ὦ ἐπίσκοπε, κέλευε καὶ παραίνει τῷ λαῷ, εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν ἐνδελεχίζειν ὄρθρου καὶ ἑσπέρας ἑκάστης ἡμέρας, καὶ μὴ ἀπολείπεσθαι τὸ σύνολον, ἀλλὰ συνέρχεσθαι διηνεκῶς.—Coteler. Patr. Apost. tom. i. p. 270.]

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exhort the people to come continually to church, morning and evening, every day; and not to fail at all:" and then they mention in the same place three services upon the Lord's day, as more solemn than all the rest. Which is exactly suitable to God's appointment among the Jews, who had daily the morning and evening offering; and on the Sabbath day another offering, *beside the continual burnt-offering*, as we read expressly, Numbers xxviii. 9, 10. They had indeed at the temple other offerings every day, about twelve o'clock; but they were not the sacrifices of the whole congregation of Israel, as the morning and evening sacrifices were, but the sacrifices of particular persons, on particular occasions. And accordingly all Christians prayed publicly twice every day, morning and evening: and had another hour also for private prayers, which was about noon; conformable to that of the Psalmist, *Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice*[m].

It must not here be forgotten, there were likewise two of the week days more solemnly observed than the rest for public prayers, viz. Wednesdays and Fridays, as hath been elsewhere proved[n]. On which days there were three services in some places, as on the Lord's day: and in all places they took special care that nothing should keep them then from the public assemblies, how negligent soever they were at other times. And the devouter sort also fasted on those two days, that they might have more time for prayer, and be excited to greater fervour in it, by a deep sense of their own unworthiness of the least of God's blessings.

And do we now think to please God, and to preserve our religion, without any of this care, either on those days or on others, but only the Lord's day? Then the Christian church in all ages, till these later times, hath been two officious, though it followed the plain instructions, and the best patterns of the holy Scriptures. Which have been so universally understood to enjoin a daily public service of God, that there is no Christian country that I can find at this day by whom this tribute is not paid unto him. All the eastern Christians, (as a learned divine

[m] Psalm lv. 17.

[n] Treatise of Repentance. [chap. xiii. p. 591, above.]

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and great traveller hath informed us[o],) Greek, Armenian, and others, constantly perform it: in the West the church of Rome still observes this practice: and in Germany both the Lutherans and the Calvinists have their daily public offices and full congregations. So we have in these islands, and in many places, full congregations also: though in others, alas! either no public assemblies, or scandalously empty. Which is a very great shame, as the formentioned Dr. speaks, that when now under the gospel God doth not require our lambs, (which were offered publicly twice every day by the Jews,) we should not daily give him the *calves of our lips*, as the prophet's phrase is; that is, pray to him, and praise him, and give him thanks in the public congregation.

Why the reformed churches in France did not thus constantly assemble, as they do in Germany, it is not my business to inquire. Mr. Calvin, I am sure, both approved of this practice, and wished it were restored, in more places of his works than one: by noting which, what I have said will be confirmed, and some reason also given of this omission. For having observed[p] that God appointed a morning and evening sacrifice to be offered among the Jews, and thereby taught them to begin and close the day with invocation and the worship of God; and (a little after) that he also appointed "stated hours" for these sacrifices, to teach us that the church cannot be without a certain discipline; he then concludes, *Ac hodie, nisi obstaret nimius torpor, utile esset quotidie haberi tales conventus*, 'and at this day, if too much sluggishness did not hinder, it would be useful every day to hold such assemblies.' And in his discourse upon the fourth Commandment[q], he not only asserts that ecclesiastical assemblies are enjoined by God's words, and that experience sufficiently shows their necessity, and that the days and times must be stated and set, or else they cannot be at all, &c.; but in answer to those who objected, "Why do we not rather meet every day, that distinction of days may be taken away?" he thus replies, *Utinam illud*

[o] Dr. Basire's Funeral Sermon for the bishop of Durham [John Cosin, D. D.], p. 95. [8vo. Lond. 1673.] and see Chemnitius, Exam. Concil. Trident. pars quarta, p. 160 and 162. [pp. 811 sqq. ed. fol. Gen. 1634.]

[p] Comment. in Acts iii. 1. [p. 25.]

[q] Lib. ii. Institutionum, cap. viii. sect. 32. [p. 99.]

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quidem daretur, &c. "Would to God we were able so to do: for certainly it was a worthy spiritual wisdom which spared a little portion of time every day from other business for God's service. But if we cannot obtain from the infirmity of many that daily assemblies may be held, and respect to charity doth not permit us to exact more of them, why do we not yield obedience to that which we see by the will of God is imposed upon us?" And he thus concludes his explication of that commandment: "This general doctrine is especially to be held; that holy meetings be diligently and religiously observed, and such external helps constantly used as may serve to support and cherish the worship of God, lest religion either fall to the ground or languish among us[r]."

To which I think fit to add what his opinion was concerning set times of prayer; for his words are very instructive. Upon Psalm lv. 17 his note is[s], that "from the mention there of *morning, evening,* and *noon,* we may gather that pious men had *statas horas,* 'set hours' for prayer in those times. Which good men observed in their private devotions, because then the public service of the temple was performed by God's appointment. For the daily sacrifice was offered every morning and evening: and the mid-day," saith he, "was appointed for other sacrifices." The reason of which he gives upon the 18th verse, "Because we are backward to this duty, therefore God, in fixing certain hours of prayer, intended to cure this infirmity." Which same reason ought to be extended to private prayer, as appears by this place; with which the example of Daniel agrees.

And upon that practice of Daniel he thus writes in his notes on Dan. vi. 16. "This example is worth the noting, of praying three times a day; because, *nisi quisque nostrum præfigat sibi certas horas ad precandum, facile nobis excidet memoria:* 'we easily forget this duty, unless every one of us prescribe to ourselves certain hours for prayer.'" From all which it is apparent that he looked upon set hours for public divine service as appointed by God; and that he also thought the reason of it to be perpetual; because, if we be left to our liberty, we shall easily forget our duty, and perform that at no

[r] [P. 100.] [s] [P. 212.]

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time which we imagine may be done at any time, as well as at that which is appointed.

The benefit of which is this, among others, that where there are no public assemblies, or men cannot, by reason of sickness or other urgent cause, attend them, they may at those set times offer some short prayer to God in private, and desire the public prayers of the church, where they are continually made, may be accepted with him. By which means they are in some sort present there, and the prayers they make in private become a part of the public; they praying as members of that body which is then met together in the house of God. Thus St. Peter prayed privately, as I observed above, at the sixth hour, when they were praying at the temple, and in Christian assemblies: and though alone at that time, yet he chose the same hours with theirs, that his prayers might be joined with the rest, and not be single, but united desires.

Thus St. Chrysostom[t] directs his people, in answer to those who objected unto his pressing arguments for attending the public prayers, "How is it possible for a secular man, engaged in business, *κατὰ τρεῖς ὥρας εὔχεσθαι*, &c., 'to pray at the three hours every day,' and run to church?" To which he replies in this manner; "Though it be not easy for every man to run to the church so oft, yet it is easy for him, even when he is in public business, to pray to God; unto which not so much the voice is requisite as the mind. And therefore let no man excuse himself by saying, *οὐκ ἔστι πλησίον εὐκτήριος οἶκος*, 'the house of prayer is not near to mine:' for if we be watchful, the grace of the Holy Spirit will make every one of us a temple of God. She that sits at the spindle may look up to heaven in her thoughts, and call upon God with fervent desires; and so may he that is in the market, or in a journey, or in his shop making shoes: in like manner a servant, he that buys meat, he that dresses it, and all the rest; when it is not possible for them to come to church, they may notwithstanding make fervent and lively prayers to God, who doth not despise the place where they are made, but desires alone warm affections, and a serious, composed mind." And he concludes thus: "My meaning in all that I have said is this, that we should go to

[t] Hom. iv. de Anna, tom. ii. [tom. iv. ed. Ben. pp. 737, 8.]

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church as oft as is possible, and when we cannot, pray at home in great quietness and tranquillity."

Which counsel if we would all follow, that is, if as many as can would come to the house of God every day, and if they that cannot would let their hearts be there, what blessings might we not expect from God! What a flourishing church and happy kingdom might we hope to see! And there are a great many people, I am sure, have leisure enough in all cities and towns to fill the churches where there are public prayers; nothing but that sluggish dulness Mr. Calvin speaks of is the hinderance; which if men would shake off, and awaken themselves to serious thoughts of God, and the need they have of him, and of constant prayer to him, and such like things as I have represented, there would be public prayers where now there are none, and men would crowd every day into the house of God (where there are) to worship him and give him thanks, and beseech him to be gracious to them. As for them whose condition and business is such that they cannot possibly attend them, nothing can hinder them but their own wills from going thither in their minds, with serious thoughts and hearty affections: entreating the Father of mercies to hear the prayers of those who are there assembled, and to pour down his blessings on such as cannot, but would be with them.

And all this it becomes us to do in the humblest manner; according to the invitation and direction of the Psalmist, which is recited every day at morning prayer, *O come let us worship and fall down; and kneel before the Lord our Maker.*

The Christian church hath never been acquainted with any other posture but this of kneeling in their prayers to God: saving only between Easter and Whitsuntide, when in memory of Christ's resurrection they were wont to stand. Which was the common posture of prayer among the Jews, except in time of trouble and distress, when they also fell upon their knees[u]. Nay, when they would express the greatest submission, lowliness, reverence, and fear, they fell upon their faces, as our Saviour did just before his agony[x]: a posture far more remote from theirs who sit at their prayers; which no man dare do who is possessed with an awful sense of his distance from God,

[u] Dan. ix. 20.

[x] Matth. xxvi. 39.

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and considers how mean a creature he is, and how unworthy to receive the smallest favour from his hands. In short, we may say to such men as Malachi doth to those who brought vile offerings unto the altar, with a little alteration, *Go now to thy governor*, and petition him in this posture; *will he be pleased with thee, or accept of thy person?* no man hath the face to present himself unto his prince in this saucy manner, especially when he comes to beg mercy of him, and pray him to spare his life which he hath forfeited to him. And therefore let none of us venture to approach thus into the presence of the great King over all the earth, the Sovereign of the world: but cast down ourselves with such lowly reverence before him, as may testify that we worship the Most High. It is not to be expected indeed that a man should bow his knees to God, when he is lame of the gout, or lies sick of a fever, or some other disease, &c.; but setting such cases aside, bending of the knees is necessary, saith Origen[y], (whose words these are,) when a man comes to accuse himself of his sins to God, and humbly to ask pardon for them, and to desire to be cured of them. Nature inclines us to it, if we have any sense of our condition, though we had no instructions about it, no examples to move us to it. And therefore I may truly say, that we divest ourselves even of humanity, when we are so rude as to sit at prayer; unless we be in such a condition as not to be able either to fall on our knees, or stand before the Divine Majesty. Then indeed we may be confident he will not reject our prayers, whatsoever the posture of our body be; but hear them, as he did St. Paul, "when he prayed and praised God in prison with his feet in the stocks; and Hezekiah, who lay on his bed by reason of his infirmity and cried to him, and the thief, who prayed as he hung on the cross, and found favour with him." They are the words of St. Chrysostom in the place now named.

I will conclude this chapter with the judgment of Mr. Calvin, who expressly determines[z], that "the precepts of *praying always* and *without ceasing*, have not respect to our own private prayers only, but to the public prayers of the church also. With which he that refuseth to join, we may conclude him not to know what it is to pray alone, either secretly or at

[y] Περὶ εὐχῆς, pars 2. n. 20. [§ 31. tom i. p. 267 E.]
[z] L. iii. Instit. cap. 20. sect. 29. [p. 236.]

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home. As, on the other side, he that neglects to pray alone and privately may be thought to put up vain prayers, though he frequent the public assemblies; because he respects more the opinion of men than the secret judgment of God. In the meantime, lest the common prayers of the church should fall into contempt, God hath adorned them with splendid elogies; especially when he calls the temple *an house of prayer*[a]. For by this speech he instructs us that the principal part of his worship is the office of prayer: in which that the faithful might exercise themselves with one consent, the temple was erected and lifted up to them like a banner, that they might all resort unto it[b]. Where there is also a famous promise added, *Praise expecteth thee, O God, in Sion: and unto thee shall the vow be performed in Jerusalem*[c]. In which words the prophet admonishes, that the prayers of the church are never in vain; because God perpetually administers to his people matter of singing his praise with joy."

Which things if they were well weighed, they would be sufficient to stir up the zeal of those who now languish, and have no concern at all for the public exercise of our religion. Especially if they would observe and mark, first, with what earnest longings holy men desired to come to the public assemblies, when by any impediment they were kept from them; (read Psalm lxxxiv. 1, 2, &c. and David's passionate breathings, xxvii. 4. *One thing have I desired of the Lord*, &c.) and secondly, with what joyful hearts they received all invitations to them: *I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem*[d].

CHAP. XX.

Some objections removed.

WHEN I reflect upon the conclusion of the foregoing chapter, I cannot but fear that they are void of the love of God, or very defective in it, who have so little regard to his honour, as not to love *the place where his honour dwelleth*, and where

[a] Isa. lvi. 7. [b] Psalm lxv. 2. [c] Ver. 1. [d] Psalm cxxii. 1, 2.

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praise waiteth for him, as the Psalmist speaks in the place now named: that is, where his glorious Majesty is extolled, his wonderful works are magnified, his benefits acknowledged, and psalms sung in honour of him, which is the greatest business of our solemn assemblies. For men hear nothing more willingly than the praises of their parents; there they delight to be, and are never weary of their attendance there, where the noble acts of their ancestors are recited with songs or speeches in their commendation. And therefore with much more diligence should we run thither without ceasing, *where men speak of the glorious honour of his Majesty, and of the wondrous works of our heavenly Father:* and declare the love of our blessed Saviour, *making known his mighty acts and the glorious majesty of his kingdom; uttering abundantly the memory of his great goodness, and singing of his righteousness*[e]. Though, alas! *who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? Who can show forth all his praise?* as the Psalmist speaks elsewhere[f]. His benefits towards us are immensely great, and cannot worthily be praised by us: but it is our duty to do what we can, that we may pursue what we ought. And therefore, if we have any respect to God, let us say and sing again with the Psalmist, nay, with our Saviour Christ, as I have before observed, *I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee. Ye that fear the Lord, praise him; all ye seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye seed of Israel. My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation: I will pay my vows before them that fear him*[g]. *I will praise thee, O God, among the people: I will sing unto thee among the nations. For thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds*[h]. *Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee*[i]. *The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence. But we will bless the Lord from this time forth and for evermore. Praise the Lord*[j].

Which last words teach us that this is a piece of public service we do to God in this world; which we are incapable to perform when we are gone from hence. Then the time is past of honouring God among men, by declaring the sense we

[e] [Psal. cxlv. 5, 7, 12.] [f] [Psal. cvi. 2.] [g] Psal. xxii. 22, 23, 25.
[h] Psal. lvii. 9, 10. [i] Psal. lxxxiv. 4. [j] Psal. cxv. 17, 18.

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have of his greatness, and speaking good of his name. For though the dead are not quite silent, yet what they say or do signifies nothing to us in this world: where we must serve God while we live, or else not at all.

Which is a new consideration to quicken us to this duty, and to silence all those objections which are apt to rise in our hearts against it.

Yes, may some say, we like the thing you press; but are against the way of doing it in this church. In which some are distasted at all forms of prayer; and others at that form wherein we worship God, and him alone.

Unto the first of these I have this to say; that when there were no forms of prayer left in this church, they that destroyed them did not daily hold public assemblies: nor do they now make it their constant practice. Which gives us too much cause to think they have not such a sense as is to be wished of their necessity. But, to let that pass, supposing some have, and that they only dislike a form of prayer, it is something strange that the same arguments which make them think daily public assemblies to be needful, should not also reconcile them to a form of prayer. Which was constantly used by the ancient Jews in their assemblies, as hath been undeniably proved by many of our writers, and was prescribed by our blessed Lord and Master, who made his prayer, I have shown, for the public service: in which he joined with the Jews when he was at the temple in Jerusalem; and when he was in the country, went to the synagogues, which the Chaldee paraphrast calls "houses of praise[i]." And so did his apostles; who themselves used a constant form of praise: for they *rested not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty, which was, and is, and is to come*[k]. This, as I showed before, was their continual hymn, which they offered to God: and it appears, by St. Paul's usual way of recommending the churches to whom he wrote unto the grace of God, that they had their forms of prayer also. For he himself constantly used these words, *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all*[l].

[i] In Isa. vii. 19. [בְּתֵּי תוּשְׁבְּחָתָא 'in omnibus domibus laudis,'—Walton. Bibl. Polyglott. in loc. p. 20.]

[k] Rev. iv. 8.

[l] 2 Thess. iii. 17, 18.

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The same power every bishop had in his church to compose prayers for the necessities of it: as we may gather from 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2. Which exhortation is directed not to the people, but to Timothy: who was to take care to have all men recommended unto God in the public offices, by *prayers and supplications*, with *intercessions and thanksgivings: for kings especially, and for all in authority*, &c. This could not be done *orderly* (as all things were to be in the Christian church) without a set form of words, which Timothy, we may well think, composed. For those words, δεήσεις ποιεῖσθαι, *that prayers be made*, signify as literally the apostle would have *prayers and supplications composed*, as that he would have them *put up to God*. And I doubt not they signify both; first, that they should be composed, and then put up to God by the church.

For you may observe further that the apostles speak of this as their work, where, having bidden the church look out some men to be appointed to attend the business of providing for the poor, they add, *but we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word*[m]. They made the prayers where they were present as much as they ministered the word. Which is further manifest from hence, that the prayers of the church of Jerusalem are called the *apostles' prayers: and they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers*[n]. Observe here how all the faithful steadfastly continued in prayers, as well as hearing the word; and that they are, first, called *prayers*, in the plural number; not one, but many prayers: and then, that they are called the *apostles' prayers;* prayers made by them. For the word *apostles* in the beginning belongs to all the three things that follow, as well as to the first: to the apostles' *fellowship*, and their *breaking of bread*, and their *prayers*, as well as to their *doctrine*.

To be brief, as John Baptist, being a public minister sent of God, taught his disciples how to pray, and our blessed Lord taught his apostles; so his apostles, in like manner, taught those whom they converted, according to the pattern Christ

[m] Acts vi. 4. [n] Acts ii. 42.

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had left them; and, no question, delivered the same power to those that should have the supreme guidance, direction, and government of the church, to compose prayers suitable to men's necessities in the several nations where they lived, and over whom they presided.

It may be thought indeed that the extraordinary gift they had in those days supplied all. But it is manifest both that every one had not that extraordinary gift of prayer; and that they also who had were to be so ordered and regulated in the exercise of it by the governors of the church, that it might serve its edification. And nothing tended more to the edification of the church than that it should have a standing known form of prayers and praises, (without which it could not be known how they worshipped God,) and not depend merely upon that extraordinary gift: which was not constant, but vouchsafed only on some special occasion, according as God pleased to impart it. Which is not said arbitrarily by me, but it appears by a convincing argument, that this extraordinary gift was not intended to serve the constant necessities of the church, but only some particular purposes: for they who had it could not make others understand it, and are therefore directed by the apostle to pray they might be able to interpret, that others might reap some benefit thereby, and be able to say *Amen* thereunto[o]. Upon which words St. Chrysostom[p] supposes they ended then their blessing in the Spirit with the very same form of words wherewith we now conclude our doxologies, or giving glory to God, viz. *εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων*, '*for ever and ever;* or *throughout all ages, world without end,*' as we translate the apostle's words[q]. And Peter Martyr thought he had reason to acknowledge as much: for upon the forenamed place, 1 Cor. xiv. 16, he hath this observation[r]: "From hence we learn, that even in those first times the public prayers were wont to be concluded with these words, *secula seculorum*, 'world without end.'"

And this place of the apostle puts me in mind of another undeniable argument for prescribed forms of worship in the Christian church: which is, that singing psalms and hymns

[o] 1 Cor. xiv. 13–16. [p] [In loc. tom. x. p. 325 E.] [q] Eph. iii. 21.
[r] [Fol. 201 b. ed. fol. Tig. 1579.]

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made up a great part of that worship, and could not possibly be performed by the whole congregation unless they had before them that which was to be sung. Therefore *singing by the Spirit*, that is, by a spiritual gift, the apostle makes small account of, unless what was sung were put into such words that all the people might understand it, and sing God's praises together with him that was inspired. This is the apostle's meaning when he bids them *speak among themselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in their heart to the Lord*[s]. Where by *psalms*, I think, all agree are meant the Psalms of David, which were a constant set form of praise. *Hymns and spiritual songs* were the compositions, it is like, of inspired persons then in the church, which could not be sung by all unless they were communicated to the whole company: and then they were a form also; and we may well think were sung more than once, it being very reasonable to conceive that they had not, every time they met, a new hymn no more than a new psalm. For St. Paul blames it as a confused, unedifying thing, that when they came together, (met, that is, in the public assemblies,) every one had his particular psalm, &c.[t]; and commands *all things should be done to edifying:* by making the psalm common; that is, so that all might be the better for it. Such, I persuade myself, were the prayers and hymns which St. Paul and Silas sung in prison: not each of them their own private prayer and hymn, but some common prayer and form of praise which they were wont to use[u].

Such hymns it is certain there were in the church, which were sung every morning in praise of our blessed Saviour; as Pliny himself testifies[x]. And Eusebius[y] produces an ancient writer, asserting the divinity of our Saviour out of the hymns that had been of old used in the church, acknowledging his divinity. And that writer calls them psalms and hymns, ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ὑπὸ πιστῶν γραφεῖσαι, 'written by the faithful from the beginning:' which celebrated Christ the Word of God, as God indeed. The most ancient of all which was the doxology we still use, "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, together

[s] Eph. v. 19. [t] 1 Cor. xiv. 26. [u] Acts xvi. 25.
[x] [Lib. x. Epist. 97.] [y] L. v. Eccles. Hist. chap. 28. [p. 252.]

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with the Holy Ghost;" as St. Basil[z] (or whosoever was the author of the book 'Concerning the Holy Spirit') reports. Where he saith, that thus it run before the Arian times: after which, to show that the church meant in those words to ascribe equal glory unto the Holy Ghost, with the Father and the Son, it was altered into that form wherein it now continues; not with the Holy Ghost, but to the Holy Ghost. Which is the very same as to the sense, there being no real difference whether we say, Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and "to the Holy Ghost," or glory be to them, "with the Holy Ghost:" but to avoid all suspicion of any distinction which the church made between them, the form, as it is now, was thought better. And so ancient and universal was this form of doxology, that the Arians themselves used one very like to it: giving "honour and glory to the Father, by his only-begotten Son, in the Holy Ghost;" as the same writer informs us[a]. Which originally had the same meaning with the other till they perverted it: signifying as much as we say now (in our communion service) when we pray for the pardon of our offences through Jesus Christ our Lord, "by whom and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honour and glory be unto thee, O Father almighty, world without end." I will not trouble the reader with any more of the ancient hymns, but only note, that even in the book of the Revelation we read not only of the *song of Moses*, but of the *song of the Lamb*: the latter of which was as much a set form as the former, and is there recorded. *Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who would not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou only art holy*[b], &c.

And what hath been said of hymns may be as truly said of prayers; that the church had from the beginning a form of divine service: which Justin Martyr[c] calls κοιναὶς εὐχὰς, 'common prayers;' and in Ignatius[d] (nearer to the apostles' time) is called δέησις κοινὴ, the 'common supplication:' which we cannot well think was any other than such as he or some other

[z] Ad Amphilochium, cap. 27, 29. [tom. iii. p. 54 sqq.]
[a] Cap. 25. [p. 49 C.]
[b] Rev. xv. 3, 4.
[c] [Apol. i. § 65. p. 82 C.]
[d] [Epist. interpol. ad Magnes. § 7. Coteler. Patr. Apost. tom. ii. p. 55.]

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apostolical man prescribed. In Origen they are called εὐχαὶ τεταγμέναι, the 'prescribed or ordained prayers;' regular petitions, which they who used were safe, he saith, from all the power of the devil. And as the hymn they sung to Christ was so celebrated, that the Pagans took notice of it, (as I observed before,) so these forms of prayer were now so well known to them that they got some scraps of them. For we find these words, Κύριε ἐλέησον, 'Lord, have mercy upon us,' in Arrianus[d], a Pagan philosopher, who lived about the same time with Justin Martyr, the next age to the apostles.

It is superfluous to add that the emperor Constantine was wont to say with his whole court εὐχὰς ἐνθέσμους, (as Eusebius[e] calls them,) the 'appointed prayers:' and delivered a form of prayer to his army to be constantly used by the soldiers: which Eusebius hath also set down in his life[f]. Let me only note, by the way, to quicken the reader to this holy duty, that as this religious prince had daily prayers in his palace, which he frequented with his courtiers, making it an *house of God;* so he had likewise certain hours wherein he constantly retired to pray by himself[g].

As for following ages, we find frequent mention of Liturgies formed by the apostles themselves, particularly by St. James: unto which though some additions perhaps had been then made, as there have been more since, yet it is hard to think that a great number of bishops would have owned a liturgy, as composed by St. James, if there had not been a constant tradition among them that the apostles left some stated form of prayer and praise in the churches which they governed.

But what need I trouble myself with a long proof of this matter, when we have the confession of the most learned and best men among those whom they that dissent from us have been wont to reverence, that there hath been no time wherein there was not a prescribed form of Divine service? Let Dr. Preston speak for all, in a book of his much prized in former times[h]: where after he had owned that Christ prescribed a

[d] In Epictetum. [lib. i. cap. 19.]
[e] L. iv. de Vita Constant. c. 17. [p. 635.]
[f] Ib. cap. 20. [p. 636.]
[g] Ib. cap. 22. [p. 637.]
[h] Saints' daily Exercise, ['A Treatise unfolding the whole duty of prayer, delivered in five sermons upon 1 Thess. v. 17.'] with a commendatory preface by Richard Sibbs and John Davenport.] p. 80. [the ninth edition, 4to. Lond. 1635.]

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form, &c. he adds: "And in the church at all times, both in the primitive times, and all along to the beginning of the reformed times, to Luther and Calvin's time, still in all times the church had set forms they used, and I know no objection of weight against it."

And in answer to that common objection which he calls the main one, that in stinted prayer the spirit is straitened, and limited, &c. he answers as we do now: "that even those men that use this reason do the same daily in the congregation; for when another prays, that is a set form to him that hears it." And therefore, if that were a sufficient reason, (that a man might not use a set form, because the spirit is straitened,) he should not hear another pray at all, (though it be a conceived prayer,) because, in that case, his spirit is limited to what that man saith. And very judiciously adds, that "it is not a bond or restraint of the spirit, because there is a tie of words: for the largeness of the heart standeth not so much in the multitude and variety of expressions, as in the extent of affection:" and at last concludes that a set form of prayer must be used[i].

Would to God they that scruple it would weigh such things as these: it would not be long then before they liked, nay loved that form of prayer which is used in this church. For it is so exactly conformable to the rule of the holy apostle, which I have often mentioned, consisting of unexceptionable *prayers, supplications, intercessions,* and *thanksgivings*[k], that one cannot but think the composers of it laid that rule before them when they framed it. It would be too long to give an account of the whole book; which it is easy to show is made up of those four parts of Divine service. Look only into the *Litany,* which is a word signifying properly a *supplication* for the turning away of evil things, with which it begins, and then proceeds to *prayers,* and to *intercessions,* having in the end a general form of *thanksgiving.* And observe the admirable method of it.

It directs our prayers to the ever blessed Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: the only object of worship, and fountain of mercy. Of whom we first deprecate evil things: and that in the right order; first desiring to be delivered from the evil

[i] [P. 82.] [k] 1 Tim. ii. 1.

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of sin, both of the spirit and of the flesh; and then from the evil of punishment, whether in outward or in inward judgments. All this we pray to be delivered from, by what Christ hath done and suffered for us, and by that alone; which is the most prevalent way of suing for mercy. And by the way observe, that what some (through misunderstanding, I hope) have been pleased to make the subject of their mirth and sport, is really, and ought to be esteemed, the most serious and effectual supplication that can be made to our Lord. "By whose holy nativity and circumcision; by his baptism, fasting, and temptation; by his agony and bloody sweat; by his cross and passion; by his precious death and burial; by his glorious resurrection and ascension; and by the coming of the Holy Ghost:" we pray to be delivered. For thus it is, our Lord having humbled himself to be a man for our sakes, nay, to take on him the form of a servant, and, after all his other sufferings, at last to die the death of the cross for us, is gone, with that blood which was there shed, into the heavens, and is exalted at God's right hand in the high and holy place: where he represents all that he did and suffered, from his coming into the world till his going out of it, before God; and in the virtue of his bloody sacrifice which he made of himself, pleads to have every thing from God, which he hath promised, and cannot be denied. Now for us to beseech him, that through the force of his sufferings of all sorts, especially of his cruel death, and the glory that followed, we may be delivered and saved from all evil, is the most pathetical, the most powerful way of entreaty, and the most prevailing importunity that can be used. It is as if we should say, Lord, show unto the Father what thou hast endured for us; represent unto him thy obedience unto death, which he promised to reward with all power in heaven and in earth. Exercise thy royal power which thou hast obtained by that humble obedience, for our deliverance and salvation. As thou hast received the gift of the Holy Ghost, and imparted it to thy apostles, so pour it down more and more upon us also, who believe the gospel which they preached and testified to be the truth.

Then follow petitions for all good things: first, for the universal church; then for our own in particular; for the king, and royal family; for all in authority under him; for all sorts

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of persons; and for all sorts of blessings, both for soul and body. Be at the pains, I beseech you, to read and consider it, with such observations as these; and it alone will be sufficient to make you in love with the rest of the book of Common Prayer. A book "so fully perfected according to the rules of our Christian religion in every behalf, that no Christian conscience (in the opinion of a famous martyr in queen Mary's days, whose words these are) could be offended with any thing therein contained[1]."

And therefore I conclude that as it would have been a great sin in the church of Ephesus, if they had disliked and rejected that way of *supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings*, wherein Timothy led them to serve God: so it will be in us, if we refuse those directions which are given us in the Divine service by our spiritual governors; when it is manifest they guide us by the word of God, and the apostolical practice according to it.

If they had composed a Divine service, wherein they required us to pray to angels, or to saints departed this life; or to supplicate God by their merits and their intercession, we should have had reason therein not to have followed their guidance; because we and they have a superior direction, God's holy word, which forbids such worship. But when no such prayers are appointed, nothing ordered to be offered unto God but what is perfectly agreeable to his holy word; we can make no apology for ourselves if we reject them merely because they are a prescribed form, or because every direction about them is not expressly required in the word of God. This is to affront the whole Christian church from the beginning. This is to throw off all subjection to spiritual pastors, whom the Holy Ghost hath commanded us to obey.

Not indeed with an illimited obedience, with an absolute assent to whatsoever they shall propose, without any examination of their injunctions, or any appeal: for this were to take away all the authority of God's word, and to erect the present authority of the church above it, which is the extreme into which they

[1] Dr. Taylor rector of Hadley. [They are the words of Rowland Taylor, in his examination before the Lord Chancellor and other commissioners of the Queen, Jan. 22, 1855, as recorded by Foxe, Acts and Monuments, &c. book xi. p. 733.]

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of the church of Rome are run. But we ought to take care that out of eagerness to avoid that extreme, we do not fall into another, as they do who affirm that spiritual pastors must only then be obeyed when they determine and give direction out of the express laws of God. For as the former take away all authority from God's word; so this takes away all authority from God's ministers, and deprives them of that obedience which by God's word is due unto them.

An excellent[m] divine of our church hath largely treated of this long ago; showing that since God in his holy word gives them in express terms some spiritual authority and right to exact some obedience peculiarly due to them from their flock; it must be in things not enjoined by the express word of God, but only not forbidden thereby. For if they be then only to be obeyed when they produce the express command of God in scripture for that particular thing unto which they require obedience, there is no more obedience performed unto them than unto any other man whatsoever. For there is no man so mean, but if he can show us the express command of God for what he says, it must be obeyed of all. But when it is thus obeyed, it is that command of God only, not he that showed it to us, which is obeyed. And if this be all the obedience we owe to our governors, they are as much bound to obey us as we to obey them. The people owe no more obedience to their pastors than those pastors owe to their people.

If neither of these extremes then be true, it remains that we owe, though not an absolute, unlimited, yet a conditional and cautionary obedience unto spiritual pastors: who have a general warrant expressly contained in scripture, to require obedience from their people; and therefore ought to be obeyed, though their people see not an express word of scripture to authorize every particular wherein they require obedience; provided they require obedience to nothing expressly condemned in scripture. Disobedience to them in such things is as dangerous as blind obedience is in matters plainly unlawful; for as the latter is the mother of superstition and idolatry, so the former is the mother of schisms, presumption, carnal security, and infidelity.

[m] Dr. Jackson upon the Creed, book 2. chap. 4, &c. [Works, vol. i. p. 348 sqq.]

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Which rocks cannot be avoided, but by a due submission to the guides of souls, in things wherein God hath not plainly ordered the contrary. And therefore, if any have been so unhappy as by their education to have imbibed a dislike to such a way of worship as they prescribe, and to be possessed with fears it may not be the right way; though they cannot say wherein it contradicts God's holy word; these fears, and all such like things, are to be overbalanced and weighed down by the authority of spiritual guides and governors. Which is good for little if it cannot settle such doubts and scruples; over which it will prevail if men consider that God commands us to obey them. And therefore their commandments are but particular branches of God's general commandment, to give obedience to them. Insomuch that they who disobey them disobey God: unless their commands be contrary to some other of the Divine commandments, as plain as that which says, *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves, &c.*[n]

Which truths, if they were rooted in our hearts, and men had a just sense of such a thing as spiritual obedience to spiritual governors, they would rather like well of the things prescribed by them for the sake of their authority by whom they are prescribed, than disobey their authority upon the account of any private dislike which they have to such prescriptions.

Make application of all this (which I have represented out of the forenamed author, in fewer words) to our own church, and its worship and governors; who have framed a divine service for us exactly conformable to the most ancient and pure patterns; with such care, with such circumspection and conscientious regard to the directions the apostles have left us, that none of its enemies can find any thing in it, as to the substance, which is not theirs. And therefore this may be justly called, in that regard as well as others, a truly apostolical catholic church. From which let no man withdraw himself, but dread the guilt of such a crime; that is, let him fear to withdraw himself from its public assemblies, from the common prayers, and from obedience to its governors. For if any man be led from these, under the pretence of purer worship, unto separate meetings, managed by those who own not the authority of this church's

[n] Heb. xiii. 17.

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governors, it is most certain he is not guided by the Spirit of Christ herein, but by the spirit of error and delusion.

Of which a very reverend person[o] hath lately given this plain demonstration; that if men had such a measure of the Spirit as makes them living members of the body of Christ, they could not but feel what sensibly hurts that body, what palpably hinders the growth of it, what disgraces and reproaches it, what wounds it, nay hazards the very life and being of it. They that want this necessary sympathy and sense of the common good of the body of Christ, and the interest of his kingdom, cannot justly pretend to any competent portion of his Spirit. For what is more necessary for our preservation than that we keep together in one body, under the same guides and governors; that we keep in the way which the church of Christ hath always trod, and be not hurried into opinions and practices so unlike the truly ancient and apostolical church, that we bear no resemblance to it? For that church had ministers superior to the rest (as indeed the Jewish church had), who governed and ruled them and the people; it had forms of divine service such as we now have: the rejection of which is to expose us to contempt and loathing, to harden men's hearts against a just reformation, to make those who are reformed grow sick and weary, and ashamed of the distracted unsettledness and ungovernableness of such people. Who like nothing but what is unlike to all the churches of Christ that have been in the world, till this last unhappy age.

This cannot proceed from the blessed Spirit of grace; which cannot lead men to destroy the church which Christ hath purchased by his blood. Which, it is evident, cannot be preserved, much less promoted, but by a due regard to those who are over us in the Lord; and by adhering closely to such an authentic constitution as that of this church: which is the genuine offspring of the apostles; declaring nothing to the people but the true sense of the ancient apostolic church throughout the world. Which always had such governors of a superior order and degree to other ministers, as we have; such prayers, such hymns; in a word, such a face of religion as is here seen in this our church of England.

[o] [Dr. Henry More,] Preface to Paralipom. Prophetica. [4to. Lond. 1685, not included in the folio edition of his works.]

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And may be seen, blessed be God, in other reformed churches: particularly in those called Lutheran, who, as Chemnitius tells us, have had solemn prayers every day; and much after the same order that is observed in ours. His words are these[p]: *Populus singulis diebus bis, certa hora, &c.* "The people assemble every day twice, at a certain hour, morning and evening, and after the singing of some psalms, lessons are read in order, partly out of the Old Testament, partly out of the New: and the assembly concludes always with common prayers, and some hymn of thanksgiving. And besides the people come together every week, on some certain day, in greater multitudes; to make public and solemn supplications, which are called Litanies. And so he proceeds to relate how they worship God with the greatest solemnity on the Lord's days, and upon special festivals, in memory of the great benefits we have received, on the Nativity, Circumcision, &c.; in short, on all the days now observed by our church."

O that there were such an heart in us, as, instead of wrangling and disputing, seriously to set ourselves to make the best use we can of such blessed opportunities as God still affords unto us, of meeting together every day for his worship and service; especially upon Litany days, when there ought to be a fuller congregation, and more than ordinary devotion. One of those days, at least, I should think every devout Christian may easily see there is great cause to set apart every week for fasting and humiliation; together with supplication and prayer to the Divine Majesty, that he would turn away his anger from us.

Men are naturally too backward, I know, to such holy employments, and satisfy themselves that they have an excellent religion, which they highly value: without considering that they have so much the greater obligation upon them to join frequently in the holy offices thereof. Let that therefore, for a conclusion, be added to all the motives I have used in this book, to stir you up to the constant performance of this duty: that it will be the greatest shame to us, if, when they whose religion is a false worship have their constant daily service, and attend upon it, we, who have the truest notions of God, and the most excellent religion, have less regard unto it: by which

[p] Exam. Concil. Trident. pars iv. cap. ult. [p. 818.]

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means their religion, how corrupt soever it be, is upheld and maintained; and for want of this ours, though never so pure, must needs fall to decay. For they that love the religion they profess, though it be not so sincere and perfect as it ought to be, yet never fail to reap all the benefits which it is able to afford: and this among the rest, that they keep their religion by their unfeigned love to it, and diligence in it. Whereas the best and soundest religion professed by those who bear not the like affection to it yields those who thus retain it little or no benefit, (as Mr. Hooker hath observed [q],) and by degrees is lost, for want of a due regard and earnest affection to it. We see this verified in Pagans, Turks, and heretics; who zealously attend upon the public offices of their religion, and so continue their sect.

How comes their religion to lead them to have frequent assemblies, and ours to make us neglect them, but that they keep up their love to their religion, such as it is, and we have lost our first love, and so endanger the loss of our religion? For had we a sincere love to it, we should be led by the natural dictates of it to attend upon its public offices, (that being the very first thing to which religion inclines us,) and there to attend with all seriousness both to the prayers and hymns and to the holy Scriptures which are then read unto us. And therefore our religion hath gone to decay, because we have not minded public assemblies daily: but where they are kept up, they are empty and thin; or when they are full, there are none of these natural signs of devotion in too many people, which are among all nations, (bended knees, hands and eyes lifted up to heaven;) nay, they do not attend to the word of God there read, but pass it by as a tale that is told; fancying, I suppose, it is never the word of God but when it is preached, that is, spoken without book.

These are not the faults of all, nor I hope of most among us.

[q] ["Without all controversy, the purer and perfecter our religion is, the worthier effects it hath in them who steadfastly and sincerely embrace it, in others not. They that love the religion which they profess, may have failed in choice, but yet they are sure to reap what benefit the same is able to afford; whereas the best and soundest professed by them that bear it not the like affection, yieldeth them, retaining it in that sort, no benefit."—Eccles. Polit. book v. chap. 1. § 4. vol. ii. p. 18.]

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But I have observed some of them (especially the last, of whispering together all the time the Scriptures are read, as if they were nothing but an empty sound), in so many persons, from whose understanding one would expect better things, that I could not but take notice of such unbecoming behaviour in the house of God. Where I beseech God to awaken all his ministers to perform their duty with careful diligence, and all his people to accompany them reverently in continual prayers and supplications, to the glory of his great name, the credit of our holy religion, the honour of this church, the increase of all true godliness and virtue among us; and the furtherance thereby of our joyful account, and happy meeting in the day of the Lord Jesus. Amen.

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